

# MENNONITES IN THE CITIES OF IMPERIAL RUSSIA

VOL. 1

BY  
HELMUT T. HUEBERT

BARVENKOVO  
BERDYANSK  
MELITOPOL  
MILLEROVO  
ORECHOV  
POLOGI  
SEVASTOPOL  
SIMFEROPOL









# **MENNONITES IN THE CITIES OF IMPERIAL RUSSIA**

**VOL.1**

**BARVENKOVO  
BERDYANSK  
MELITOPOL  
MILLEROVO  
ORECHOV  
POLOGI  
SEVASTOPOL  
SIMFEROPOL**









# **MENNONITES IN THE CITIES OF IMPERIAL RUSSIA**

**VOL. 1**

**BY  
HELMUT T. HUEBERT**

**BARVENKOVO  
BERDYANSK  
MELITOPOL  
MILLEROVO  
ORECHOV  
POLOGI  
SEVASTOPOL  
SIMFEROPOL**





Published by Springfield Publishers of Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada

**Library and Archives Canada Cataloguing in Publication**

Huebert, Helmut T., 1935-

Mennonites in the cities of imperial Russia / author and cartographer,  
Helmut T. Huebert.

Includes bibliographical references and index.

ISBN 0-920643-10-8 (v. 1)

1. Mennonites--Russia--History. 2. Mennonites--Ukraine--History.  
Mennonites--Russia--Registers. 4. Mennonites--Ukraine--Registers.  
5. Mennonites--Russia--Biography. 6. Mennonites--Ukraine--Biography.  
I. Title.

BX8119.R8H843 2006

289.7'47

C2006-905055-4

All cartography by Helmut T. Huebert.

Copy Editor Susan E. Huebert

First Printing October 2006

Second Printing November 2008

**MENNONITES IN THE CITIES OF IMPERIAL RUSSIA VOLUME I**

Barvenkovo, Berdyansk, Melitopol, Millerovo, Orechov, Pologi, Sevastopol,  
Simferopol

Copyright© 2006 by Springfield Publishers, 6 Litz Place, Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada,  
R2G 0V1, telephone (204) 334-4728, E-mail [huebertz@mts.net](mailto:huebertz@mts.net)

All rights reserved. With the exception of brief excerpts for review or very limited copying  
of materials for strictly private use, no part of this book may be reproduced without  
written permission by the publisher.

International Standard Book Number 0-920643-10-8

Printed in Canada by Christian Press, Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada

## PREFACE

When the Mennonites first migrated from Prussia to South Russia in 1789 to form the Chortitza Colony, then again in 1804 to establish the Molotschna Colony, they moved onto the land. They were not all originally farmers in Prussia, and for that matter they were not all good farmers in Russia, but forming closed farm villages seemed most likely to allow them to control their own destiny in the new home land.

When the two Mennonite delegates, Hoepfner and Bartsch, had negotiated for the proposed settlement, they were looking primarily for good agricultural land, but they also obtained privileges to build factories and other business enterprises both in their own villages and in the cities of Ekaterinoslav and Taurida provinces. The option of living in the city was first exercised by Heinrich Thiessen, who settled in Ekaterinoslav (now Dnepropetrovsk) in 1805, building a treadmill and a vinegar processing plant. He was followed by a number of other families, and in time a large percentage of the flour milling capacity of the city was owned by Mennonites. Mennonites moved into Berdyansk soon after it was developed into a port on the Sea of Azov in the 1830s, and continued to have a considerable presence in that city until the Communist takeover in the 1920s. In some cities Mennonites played a major role in civic administration, such as in Ekaterinoslav and Berdyansk, while in others they seem to have participated very little, such as in Millerovo.

Mennonites were eventually found in most cities of Imperial Russia - in some capacity or other. For a scholarly analysis of the phenomenon itself I refer you to an excellent article written by George Epp in 1989 as part of a volume honouring the memory of Gerhard Lohrenz. This present book, on the other hand, is meant to be a source of specific information, largely about individuals. An attempt is made to document the presence in the cities of every single Mennonite that walked the urban streets, those that could be confirmed by specific evidence. This often included people who moved to the cities for business reasons, especially to build flour mills and agricultural machinery factories - such as Millerovo, Orechov and Barvenkovo. In the latter part of the nineteenth and early part of the twentieth century young people visited various universities and colleges in the cities, so they are also listed, for example ten medical students in Simferopol. Some Mennonites moved to the cities to teach in various institutions, for example A H Unruh in Barvenkovo and A A Neufeld in Berdyansk. The lists even include unfortunates incarcerated in city prisons, for example Franz Teichrieb in Simferopol during the "Great Purge" of Stalin. A considerable number have also been identified in the 1920s as those needing food vouchers, or as refugees fleeing from the Soviet Union, from lists published in the Mennonite press.

It was originally planned to include all of the major cities of Imperial Russia in one volume, but it soon became apparent that the number of Mennonites being recorded was much larger than originally contemplated; it will require a two volume set. The second volume will be worked on soon after the first one is published.

The typical city chapter includes a brief history of the city, with its historical significance and Mennonite connections being featured, followed by maps of the city and the surrounding area and some pictures of the city itself. Then comes a complete list of every Mennonite known to have lived or stayed in the city, including some other information such as date of birth, parents, children and major events in the life of the person. Mennonite institutions, events and businesses are listed,



including pictures where available. In some instances important Mennonite events have been detailed. Brief (up to ten page) biographies of selected prominent individuals who lived in the city are part of the chapter; this writing often involved direct contact with their descendants. Sources are listed for each city chapter, but also specifically mentioned for each of the major biographies. Size of the chapters varies tremendously, that for Pologi, for example, being 12 pages, that for Berdyansk is 166 pages. There is a personal name index of those who lived in the cities at the back of the book.

I owe my thanks to the two archive centres in Winnipeg, the Centre for M B Studies and the Mennonite Heritage Centre. Conrad Stoesz, who works at both centres, has been a valuable and always cheerful helper, particularly in preparing long lists using the GRANDMA Genealogy program to ferret out hundreds of names. Many others have also been graciously forthcoming in supplying information, especially when their own forefathers were involved. Without all this help the task of this compilation would have been impossible.

I have had to be practical in some instances, although I also realize that academics will find this inexcusable. To have specifically designated footnotes in each instance from which information has been gleaned would make it much easier for researchers to check my sources, but would also have made the book a nightmare for the ordinary reader. It also would have made the book substantially bigger. I have elected to have sources listed at the end of each biography and at the end of each city chapter. Again, some additional annoyance for those interested in proper details. I have chosen to ignore periods after name initials. It is not J. B. Toews, but J B Toews. This has saved me many hours of careful detailed editorial scrutiny.

It will be noted that the people who actually lived in the city are, in the first primary reference of each city, listed in **bold** type. Other friends and relatives who did not live in the city, as important as they may be, are in ordinary type. If that person's name appears again on that same city list, it no longer merits the bold type. Some people lived in more than one city - then they deserved a **bold** designation in each city.

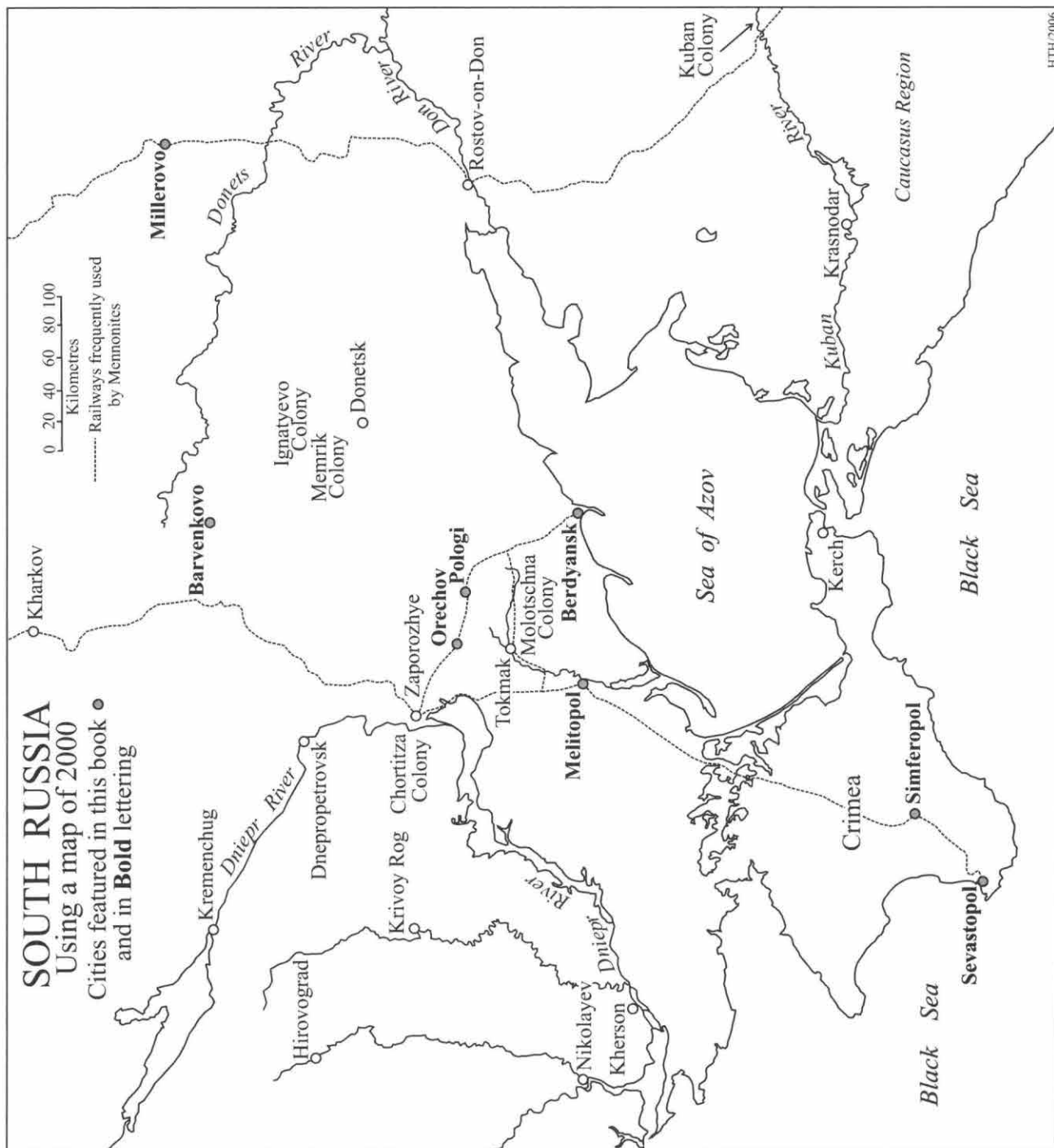
Not everyone will agree with all the data presented in this book, and I sympathize with this point of view. It must be realized, however, that I could only be as accurate as the documents from which I got the information. An example of the difficulty would be one family where three sources list the same parents, same birthdays and all, but the list of children varies substantially, both in names, birth order and actually the number of children. They are all deceased, so I could not ask anyone directly!

I sincerely trust that this book will be a valuable tool for further research into the lives of many Mennonites who lived and worked in the fascinating world of the cities of Imperial Russia.

Helmut T Huebert  
October, 2006

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

Preface.....	v
Table of Contents.....	vii
Map: South Russia.....	viii
I Barvenkovo.....	1
Abraham Heinrich Unruh (1878-1961).....	43
II Berdyansk.....	52
Kornelius Janzen.....	182
Leonhard Isaak Sudermann.....	193
Heinrich Ediger and Alexander Ediger.....	203
III Melitopol.....	219
IV Millerovo.....	257
Wilhelm Isaak Dyck.....	318
Cornelius Abram DeFehr.....	329
Kornelius Jakob Martens and Maria (nee Dyck) Martens.....	339
V Orechov.....	355
VI Pologi.....	374
VII Sevastopol.....	386
Peter Martinovitch Friesen.....	396
VIII Simferopol.....	408
Index.....	438





# Chapter I

# BARVENKOVO

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

Table of Contents.....	1
History of Barvenkovo.....	2
Barvenkovo city square in 1913.....	4
Map of Kharkov Province.....	5
Map of Naumenko Colony.....	5
Map of Barvenkovo City (1939).....	6
List of People.....	7
Pictures of People.....	26
Mennonite Institutions.....	31
Pictures of Schools.....	34
Mennonite Businesses.....	35
Pictures of Business Establishments.....	36
Mennonite Estates near Barvenkovo.....	42
Abraham Heinrich Unruh (1878-1961).....	43
Sources.....	50

## HISTORY OF BARVENKOVO

Barvenkovo city is the centre of the Barvenkovo Region, in the Kharkov Oblast of the Ukraine. It is located on the Sukhoi Torets River in the Severnyi Donets basin. It is about 140 km south-southeast of Kharkov.

There are two theories about the founding of Barvenkovo. According to one version twelve Cossacks from Zaporozhye, headed by Chief Barvenko, came to settle in the region in 1653. The second version dates the Cossack settlement, headed by Barvenkovo, to 1734. In 1760 a fortress was built in the territory; about 200 Cossacks occupied the region. The settlement grew, in 1770 having a population of 2,409; by 1790 it was 3,370. The principal occupation was farming. At some time landlords must have moved in to claim the area, since it is mentioned that most of the people were very poor, working mainly for the benefit of the landowners.

With expansion of the railways in the late nineteenth century a line was built through Barvenkovo, connecting it to Lozovaya in the west and Slavansk in the east. It was the presence of the rail connection, coupled with good surrounding agricultural land and an abundant supply of labour that first attracted Mennonite business to the city. By the late nineteenth century the population was 14,000.

Starting in 1894 Mennonites started moving into the city. Peter and Gerhard Froese built a steam-powered flour mill at that time. By 1910 Mennonites owned four large flour mills and two smaller ones, one large factory producing agricultural and industrial machinery, and a number of machine shops and warehouses as well as two large dealerships for imported machinery. They had an elementary school, participated in the running of a secondary school, and worshiped in their own church building. In 1914 there were 216 Mennonites in the city.

There was periodically some tension between the Russian and the Mennonite populations. There was some worker agitation in the industrial enterprises in the mini-revolution of 1905-1906; this likely included workers at Mennonite business enterprises. Missionary activity by Mennonites among the Russian population irritated the local Russian authorities, especially the church hierarchy, culminating in the jailing of two Mennonite leaders for a brief time in 1909. Most often, however, there was cooperation, as exemplified in the joint sponsorship of the secondary school.

Itinerant minister Elder Hermann A Neufeld reported that in the third week of January of 1919 refugees fled from Barvenkovo and surrounding areas, fleeing from Anarchist bands. A large battle took place near Barvenkovo, apparently won by the Cossack White Army.

After the Revolution anti-German sentiments together with government confiscation of private business caused many of the Mennonite industrialists and leaders to flee from Barvenkovo. The Mennonite Brethren Church continued to function for some time in the 1920s, so a number of Mennonites must have remained.

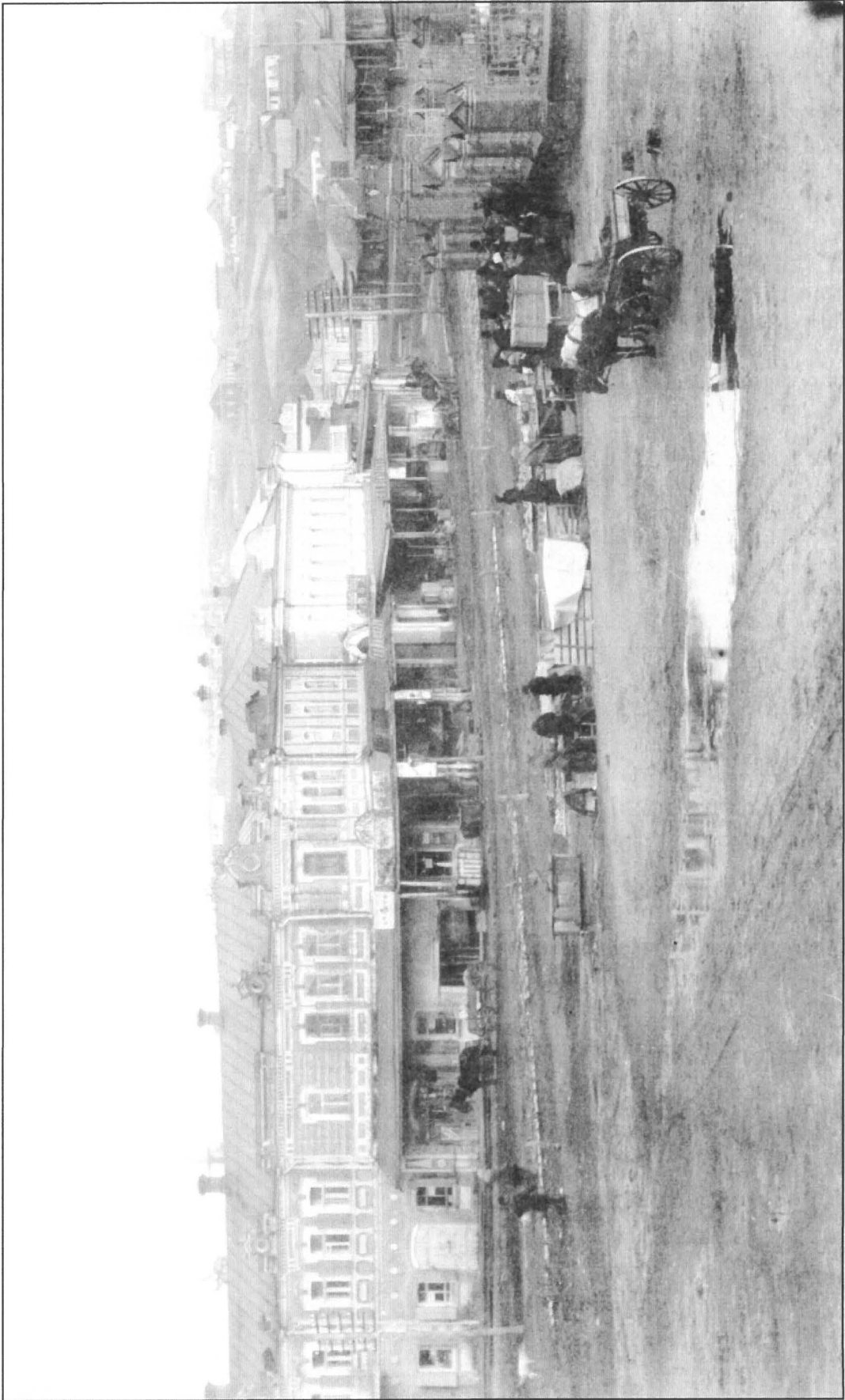
In the 1930s Barvenkovo was said to have six mills, an electrical power station, three sausage shops, an alcohol brewery, six industrial workshops as well as the factory "Red Ray." The population was 17,000. Barvenkovo was declared to be a city in 1938.

In September of 1941, in response to the German invasion, the Soviets evacuated industrial machinery and much of the population so that it would not be overrun by the invaders. There were ferocious battles, often with large numbers of tanks, fought between the German Army and the Red

Army in and around Barvenkovo, destroying much of the city. The front moved back and forth; Barvenkovo was first occupied by the Germans on 23 October 1941. A number of citizens were arrested and executed; 490 people were taken to Germany as slave labour. Eventually, after the defeat in Stalingrad, the Germans retreated from the region in September of 1943.

After the war many of the citizens returned and tried to rebuild Barvenkovo. The Froese flour mills had been destroyed, likely during the war, and were not rebuilt. The “Red Ray” (formerly *Lutch*) factory was not completely destroyed, and some parts of it were reconstructed to allow it to continue functioning on a limited scale. In 1968 the population of the city was 14,300. Industry included a mine equipment plant, food and light industry enterprises and production of construction materials.

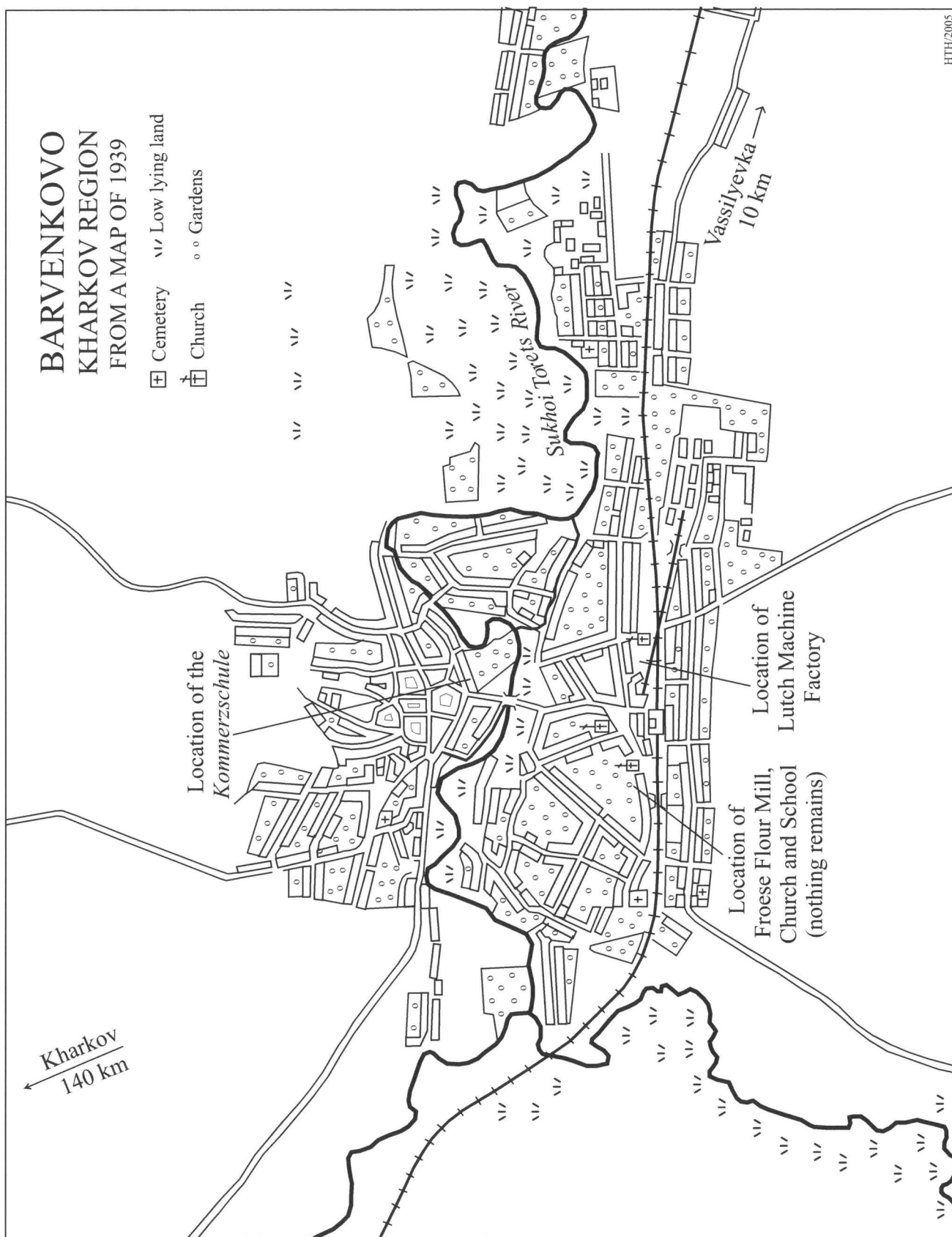
Recent visitors have noted that the city does not appear to be growing. The factory “Red Ray” does at times seem to be producing, although on one occasion most of its workers were laid off. There were small shops and businesses, but as a whole there did not seem to be much commercial activity.



Barvenkovo city square in 1913







## LIST OF PEOPLE

(People who at one time lived in Barvenkovo)  
(Each name will appear in **bold** print only once)

We have been able to identify at least 184 Mennonites who spent some time of their life in the city of Barvenkovo. This does not include people who lived in the neighbouring villages such as Vassilyevka and Petrovka, which were also part of the Naumenko Colony. Obviously the list is incomplete, since there were said to be 216 Mennonites in the city in 1914

### **Albrecht, Franz**

Born 25 December 1850 in Sandhof, Russia

Married **Margaretha Friesen**

Born 24 April 1853 in Rosenort, Molotschna

Children:

**Elisabeth** - born 4 January 1873, likely in Slavgorod, with family to Barvenkovo in 1889, married Peter Doerksen 17 June 1900, died 23 November 1904, likely in Barvenkovo

**Margaretha** - born 20 November 1874, likely in Slavgorod, with family to Barvenkovo in 1889, married Cornelius Penner 13 October 1894

**Nikolai** - born 7 June 1876 in Slavgorod, moved with family to Barvenkovo in 1889

Married **Susanna Rempel** 1 June 1899

Children:

**Heinrich** - born March 1900 in Barvenkovo, died 11 April 1902 in Barvenkovo

**Jakob** - born 24 August 1901 in Barvenkovo, married Anna Hildebrand 22 May 1925, stayed in Russia when the rest of the family immigrated to Canada in 1926, 4 children

**Nikolai** - born 27 April 1903 in Barvenkovo, died 4 August 1904 in Barvenkovo

**Susanna** - born 12 November 1904 in Barvenkovo, died 12 August 1921 in Grigoryevka

**Margaretha** - born 9 February 1906 in Barvenkovo, died 28 February 1906 in Barvenkovo

**Anna** - born 28 January 1907 in Barvenkovo, immigrated to Canada with family in 1926, married Jakob Cornelius Neufeld 5 August 1928, 8 children, died 15 December 1974, likely in Coaldale, Alberta

**Nikolai** - born 4 March 1909 in Barvenkovo, died 5 August 1910 in Barvenkovo

Wife Susanna died of cholera 28 July 1910

Moved to Grigoryevka 1910

Married Sara Loepp 22 January 1911

Children: Sara, Heinrich, Nikolai, Margaretha, Agatha, Peter, Kornelius, Johann, Maria

Nikolai, wife Sara and 9 children immigrated to Canada, arriving in Plum Coulee, Manitoba in September 1926. Married son Jakob did not immigrate with the family

Bought a farm 5 miles west of Boissevain, Manitoba

Nikolai died in Boissevain 3 November 1931, Sara died 21 September 1968

### **Brucks family**

Three Brucks family members are on the picture of the Barvenkovo youth group, 2 females and 1 male

### **Derksen, David**

Minister

Moved to Barvenkovo and served as a minister in the church

Owned a business dealing with musical instruments

### **Dick, J**

Engineer at the large Froese mill

Played a part in the construction of the church/school, particularly in the construction of a movable partition

### **Dick, Peter Heinrich**

Lived in Barvenkovo

Owned an estate of 500 dessiatines in the Isjum region

### **Dueck, Bernhard Bernhard**

Born 27 December 1879 in Kronberg

Third child of Bernhard Heinrich Dueck and Helena Wiebe

Father died at age 60 (March 1898) in Kronberg, mother died 12 October 1912 in Barvenkovo

A younger sister Katharina married Johann Peter Froese; he was one of the co-owners of the *Lutch* factory. She died in March of 1919

An even younger sister Sara first married Johann Abram Froese, then after he died married Johann Peter Froese in November 1919 after the death of her sister Katharina

Married **Anna Thiessen**, likely about 1909.

In 1910 joined with brother-in-law Johann Peter Froese and Johann Johann Klassen to build the *Lutch* factory to produce agricultural and industrial machinery

At first went well, but in a few years went heavily into debt

The family home in Barvenkovo was on the factory grounds, next to the other owners' homes

The homes were not particularly elaborate, but of the three, the Dueck house was the best

Eventually sold to Russians from Kharkov, but this deal did not work out

The Communist government bought them out, but the amount paid was very small

With the unsettled times the Dueck family bought a small farm in the Nauvenko colony near Barvenkovo

Immigrated to Canada in 1926, settling in Gnadental, Manitoba

Bernhard died 21 April 1941 in Gnadental, wife Anna lived considerably longer

Children:

**Anna** - born in Barvenkovo about 1910; went to elementary school there

To Canada with parents in 1926

Married Philip Wiebe; with family moved to Clearbrook, BC

**Dueck, Helene (Mrs Bernhard Dueck)**

Married Bernhard Dueck, he died in Kronberg at the age of 60

Their children: Abram, Heinrich, **Bernhard**, **Katharina**, Peter, **Sarah**, Dietrich

Of these Bernhard, Katharina, and Sara lived for a time in Barvenkovo

For a time Helene Dueck was guardian of the young Aron Peter Froese

She lived with the Johann Peter Froese family in Barvenkovo (with her daughter Katharina) until she died in 1912

**Dyck, Johann**

Wife **Maria**

Son **Paul**

Sister **Anna**

Immigrated to Canada, landing 2 January 1926

**Eitzen, K**

Contributed 40 rubles to the *Bethania Heilanstalt* by October 1911

**Epp, Heinrich**

Owner of a small steam-powered flour mill

The business was valued at 40,000 rubles in 1908

**Epp, Peter**

At the request of A H Unruh he was added to the faculty of the *Kommerzschule* for more advanced studies in German

**Falk, Maria**

Son

Immigrated to Canada, landing 21 October 1925

**Froese, Abram**

Attended the *Gymnasium* in Barvenkovo in 1919

**Froese, Aron Peter**

Born 21 May 1895 in Andreasfeld

Parents Peter Kornelius Froese and his second wife Maria Loeppky; eighth child of this marriage

Orphaned age 6, lived in the home of Mr Thiessen of Blumenheim, but then went to the home of widow Mrs Helena Dueck in Barvenkovo, the mother of Bernhard Bernhard Dueck

Received education in *Dorfschule* and *Kommerzschule* in Barvenkovo

Graduated as a bookkeeper and was employed by Johann Peter Froese in the *Lutch* factory

When WWI broke out served as a *Sanitaeter*

During the Revolution was forced into the Red Army. Was taken prisoner by the Whites, but escaped and eventually arrived back in Barvenkovo

Met and married **Katharina Goertzen** 10 September 1922

In 1926 Aron, wife and 2 children immigrated to Canada

Went to Laird, then Mayfair and Mulligar, Saskatchewan

1935 to Little Buffalo in Glenbush area; 1938 to Wingham, Manitoba

Serious accident resulting in his death 23 October 1956 in Manitoba

In 1960 wife Katharina and daughters moved to Winnipeg



12 children:

- Anna** - born 26 July 1923 in Ukraine  
married John B Enns
- Johann** - born 10 January 1925 in Ukraine  
married Jessie Schmidt
- David - born 23 November 1926  
married Margaret Peters
- Cornelius - born 22 April 1928  
married Elnora Heinrichs
- Frank - born 30 October 1929  
married Agnes Duncan
- Bernhard - born 16 June 1931  
married Janet Penner
- Aron - born 16 June 1931  
married Mary Durksen
- Katharina (Kay) - born 28 September 1933
- George - born 6 April 1936  
married Verna Penner
- Mary - born 29 September 1938
- Elizabeth - born 21 November 1939
- Margaret - born 3 October 1942  
married Emil Richard Kasak

**Froese, Bernhard Peter**

Born 6 January 1893 in Andreasfeld  
Parents Peter Kornelius Froese and his second wife Maria Loeppky; seventh child of this marriage  
Orphan at the age of 8 years  
Went to live with his eldest half-brother Peter in Barvenkovo  
Peter made it possible for him to continue his education, elementary and *Kommerzschule* in Barvenkovo, then university in Moscow  
Education cut short when he was drafted into the *Forsteidienst*  
During the Revolution he was a medical aide, assisting both Reds and Whites  
When able to, he returned to his family, who by then was living in Vassilyevka  
Married Maria Froese in 1922  
Immigrated to Canada in 1926 when the second daughter was a few months old  
Pioneered at Mulligar, Saskatchewan. Moved when the MB Church became too small to be registered  
Died 1 month after moving to Newton, Manitoba, on 3 November 1950  
Wife Maria moved to Winnipeg, where she died in 1966  
Children:

- Maria (Mary) - born 23 June 1924 in Andreasfeld  
married George Petkau
- Agathe - born 26 January 1926 in Ukraine

married Julius Petkau  
Anna - born 7 October 1927  
married George Dyck  
Jacob - born 14 August 1932  
married Tina Peters  
Helena - born 23 March 1935  
married Bert Goertzen  
Peter - born 2 April 1937

### **Froese, David Peter**

Born 26 March 1890  
Sixth child of Peter Kornelius Froese and his second wife Maria Loeppky  
Age 11 became an orphan. Given to Peter and Anna Nickel, relatives who had no children  
Not happy in this home  
After his graduation from *Dorfschule* in 1906 or 1907, taken in by his older half-brothers to be  
a helper in their flour mills  
Brothers noticed the potential for becoming a miller, so they arranged for him to take a one  
year course in Germany  
Upon his return he became a miller in one of the brothers' mills in Barvenkovo  
David was known to be punctual and meticulous  
Became acquainted with **Katharina Neustaedter**, who had helped in the Gerhard Froese home  
for one winter  
Did his required years in the *Forsteidienst*, then married Katharina on 16 April 1916 in  
Nikolaiyevka  
Both were baptized and became members of the MB Church before they were married  
David worked as miller in various villages of the Ukraine, eventually working mainly in  
repair and reconstruction. Some of this time was spent in Barvenkovo  
Attempted to leave the USSR in 1929 via Moscow, but were unsuccessful  
Harassment and political persecution

#### Children:

**Peter** - born 19 May 1917, died 8 Aug 1918  
**Hilda** - born 21 Dec 1919 in Kamenskaya  
**Kornelius** - born 14 August 1924 in Barvenkovo, died 12 March 1963 in USSR  
**Johann (Hans)** - born 4 February 1928 in Barvenkovo

Imprisoned by the NKVD on 22 February 1938 when they were living in Alexandromarovka  
Visited once by his son Kornelius, then never heard from again, probably died 1938  
Wife Katharina and 3 children overrun by German invading forces during WWII, then  
retreated along with them  
Son Kornelius drafted into the German army and eventually recaptured by the Soviets  
Katharina, Hilda and Johann eventually arrived in Canada in 1948  
Katharina died 8 March 1980 following a stroke

### **Froese, Franz Abraham**

Son of Abraham Abraham Froese (who was brother of Gerhard and Peter Froese) of  
Wiesenfeld. Franz stayed at the home of Gerhard Froese when he went to

*Kommerzschule* in Barvenkovo, possibly 1915-18. Franz and his father Abraham were killed by bandits in 1919

### **Froese, Franz Peter**

Born 11 February 1883 in Andreasfeld

Third child of Peter Kornelius Froese and his second wife Maria Loeppky

1890-97 *Dorfschule* in Andreasfeld

Accepted Christ as Saviour 1897

*Zentralschule* in Chortitza 1897-1901

Both parents died; he worked on the family farm for a year

Spring 1902 to Barvenkovo to train as a bookkeeper in the flour mill owned by his 2 older half-brothers and Aron Lepp. Hired as a bookkeeper for the company when he finished his course

Lived with Gerhard, then with Peter

Married **Anna Lepp**, daughter of one of the mill partners, on 6 January 1905

Drafted into *Forsteidienst* in 1905 at Razin, Kherson

Back to his position when he completed his term

Spring 1909 Aron Lepp sold his share of the flour mill and moved to Omsk, Siberia, where he established his own mill.

Franz and Anna followed Lepp to Omsk, where Franz worked as bookkeeper in the business

Did not succeed, so Lepp sold the mill in 1912 and built a farm implement factory. Again

Franz was employed as bookkeeper

In 1913 Aron Lepp bought 301 dessiatines of land 12 miles south of Omsk (not completely debt free), and gave it to his 2 daughters, Anna Froese and Katharina Janzen. The 2 young couples moved onto the land in the spring of 1914

Called the estate Ekatherinovka

1914-17 both Franz Froese and Janzen served in *Forsteidienst*

1924 Franz and Anna immigrated to Canada, settling first in Aberdeen, Saskatchewan

Pioneered in Mayfair, Saskatchewan; sold out and moved to Virgil, Ontario

Back west to Manitoba after 1½ years. Eventually a 3 acre plot in North Kildonan, active in the MB Church

Anna died 19 May 1947, Franz moved to British Columbia, married Maria Penner

Maria died 24 Jan 1967

Franz back to Winnipeg, in time to Donwood Manor; he died 21 June 1883 at the age of 100

Children:

**Franz** - born October 1908 in Barvenkovo, to Omsk with the family at age of 7 months

Katharina - born 27 January 1910 in Omsk

Aron - born 8 November 1912 in Omsk, died 5 January 1915 in Omsk

Maria - born 25 September 1917 in Ekatherinovka, died 28 February 1921 in Estate Ekatherinovka

Peter - born 12 April 1920 in Ekatherinovka, died 4 March 1921 in Ekatherinovka

Anna - born 26 November 1921 in Ekatherinovka, died January 1923 in Ekatherinovka

Johann (John) - born 23 May 1924 in Aberdeen, Saskatchewan

**Froese, Gerhard Peter**

Born 26 July 1867 in Andreasfeld

Sixth child of Peter Kornelius Froese and Maria Bock

Experienced spiritual renewal at age 18

Married **Anna Penner** 26 April 1890

Lived in Andreasfeld; first 2 children born there

1894 Gerhard with brother Peter and brother-in-law Aron Lepp (son of Elder Aron Lepp)  
constructed a steam-powered flour mill in Barvenkovo

1904 expanded and built a larger mill

Deacon of the MB Church, and involved in its formation and function

Involved with establishing the Mennonite elementary school

Concerned about the spiritual welfare of his employees and began to hold religious services  
at the mill in Russian

In 1908 a travelling Russian minister held a service without reporting it to the police, they  
arrested and jailed Gerhard and A H Unruh, the minister at the Barvenkovo MB Church,  
spent 30 days in jail.

Family enjoyed great wealth and prosperity until the Revolution when they lost the mill and  
all their properties

Fled to Tchongrav, Crimea, where Gerhard was able to buy a small farm, he found it difficult  
to return to hard farm labour

In 1929 Gerhard and Anna, with 3 daughters, Maria, Margaretha and Amalie were able to  
escape through Moscow, stayed in Germany for half a year, 1930 they arrived in Winkler

In 1933 they moved to Winnipeg, joined the South-End Mennonite Brethren Church,  
where Gerhard was deacon and treasurer, Anna was active in the ladies' group

Children:

**Katharina** (Kaeti) - born 13 May 1892 in Andreasfeld

Attended elementary school in Barvenkovo, *Maedchenschule* in Neu-Halbstadt

Married Gerhard Reimer 16 June 1912

Husband studied in universities in Kiev, Saratov

Back to Barvenkovo, then to Moscow, where husband was in *Sanitaetsdienst*

Fled from Barvenkovo with parents in 1918, to Tchongrav, Crimea

Husband Gerhard taught in Bible School in Tchongrav

Katharina died 26 March 1921 in the Crimea, after birth of second child

**Anna** - born 14 November 1894 in Andreasfeld

Married Jakob Janzen June 1917, he was a bookkeeper at the mill

Anna attended elementary school in Barvenkovo, then 2 years *Maedchenschule*

Helped manage Froese household, fled to Crimea in 1918 with rest of family

Evacuated 1941, Jakob exiled and died 1945

Anna and daughters on the "Great Trek," eventually to Canada in 1948

Died 3 April 1953 in Winnipeg

**Maria** - born 9 January 1885 in Barvenkovo

Elementary school and *Kommerzschule* in Barvenkovo

Bookkeeper in family flour mill  
Fled to Crimea with family in 1918; worked as teacher  
To Moscow, then Germany in 1929 with parents  
To Canada in 1930, first to Winkler, then in 1933 to Winnipeg  
Worked as domestic, then for the German newspaper *Nordwesten*  
Died 27 October 1980 in Winnipeg

**Susannah** - born 17 November 1897 in Barvenkovo

Elementary school in Barvenkovo, then *Maedchenschule*  
Fled to Tchongrav, Crimea, in 1918 with family, worked in hospital in Karassan  
Met and married Franz Teichrieb 10 December 1924  
Franz was a carpenter who lived in Spat  
Could not leave in 1929 because Franz had typhoid fever  
Franz exiled in 1936, died in exile 1938 or 1939  
Susanna and children evacuated in 1941; on "Great Trek" in 1943-1944  
To Winnipeg, Canada in 1947, died 2 July 1979 in Winnipeg

**Agatha** - born 13 October 1899 in Barvenkovo, died 3 March 1902 measles epidemic, in Barvenkovo

**Gerhard** - born 18 January 1902 in Barvenkovo, died 3 August 1918 in Barvenkovo

Attended elementary school and *Kommerzschule* in Barvenkovo  
Died 3 August 1918 in Barvenkovo, of typhoid fever, 18 days after onset

In October 1950 Gerhard and Anna celebrated their Diamond Wedding Anniversary

Gerhard died 29 June 1955; Anna died 3 years later

#### **Froese, Heinrich**

Born 21 September 1897 in Barvenkovo

Wife Anna - born 26 March 1895 in Lichtfelde, Molotschna

Children:

Elisabeth - born 7 April 1921 in Taschumyevka, Omsk

Franz - born 11 March 1923 in Taschumyevka, Omsk

Alfred - born 23 March 1925 in Taschumyevka, Omsk

The family lived in Taschumyevka, Omsk region, then later fled over the Amur River ice to Harbin, China, from where they likely went to South America

#### **Froese, Jakob**

Minister in the MB Church

He and A H Unruh ministered to the surrounding Russian population

#### **Froese, Jakob Kornelius**

Owner of a machinery business

#### **Froese, Jakob Peter**

Born 5 February 1888 in Andreasfeld

Parents Peter Kornelius Froese and his second wife Maria Loeppky; fifth child of this marriage

Attended *Dorfschule* for one more year after the death of his parents in 1901

Taken in temporarily by his older half-brother Abraham in Wiesenthal, then later by a

Thiessen family in Kronberg, until their son returned he was employed as foreman on



their farm

Later found employment with a cousin, Jakob Kornelius Froese, in a machine business in Barvenkovo. Here he performed well

Married **Maria Penner** of Barvenkovo, her father owned a *Schlichtmuehle*, Jakob became co-owner of the business

Drafted into *Sanitaetsdienst* during WWI, became ill with typhus

He came home to die, leaving his widow with **one daughter**

He died 21 November 1919 in Barvenkovo

### **Froese, Johann Peter**

Born 25 March 1878 in Andreasfeld

First child of Peter Kornelius Froese and his second wife Maria Loeppky

Half-brother of Peter P Froese and Gerhard P Froese, owners of a large flour mill

*Dorfschule* in Andreasfeld, *Fortbildungsschule* in neighbouring village

Baptized 1 May 1894

Loner, worked on his father's farm, read a lot

Well versed in literature and history of Russia and Europe, enjoyed singing

Married **Katharina Dueck** 20 October 1902

First year lived on parent's farm in Andreasfeld, then a year on mother-in-law's farm in Kronberg

Own *wirtschaft* in Kronberg; first 4 children born there

1907 to Vassilyevka near Barvenkovo; acquired 3 *wirtschaften*; son Peter born there

Wife Katharina managed household, cooked for the family and 8 Russian workers, tended the garden and orchard, she developed tuberculosis

1910 moved into Barvenkovo to go into business

With Johann Klassen and Bernhard Dueck started factory *Lutch* which produced agricultural and industrial machinery

The three owners had their homes at the back of the factory property

The factory, except for the foundry, went up in flames in 1912 and was rebuilt

2 more children born in Barvenkovo, Johann and Katharina

1914 the factory built wagons and soup kitchens for the *Sanitaeter*

Sold factory to 3 wealthy Russians before the Revolution broke out

With the onset of the Revolution the owners vanished, forfeiting their down payment; reverted back to the original owners

Revolutionary authorities went through the motions of purchasing the factory

Johann's share of the first payment was just enough to buy his wife a pair of shoes

Johann was needed for the factory to function, so he was permitted to stay as an employee on a small wage

Spring 1918 abandoned their house for 4 nights and hid in basements

Went to Yalta for medical treatment of his ailing wife - Johann, Katharina, and children Helena and Peter. Katharina's health improved

Back to Barvenkovo in Nov 1918, retrieved some of their belongings from the house, and moved in with Katharina's sister, the recently widowed Sarah (nee Dueck) Froese in Vassilyevka

Katharina died March 1919, Johann married Sara Froese November 1919.  
Together they had 6 live children; 5 more were born into this marriage  
July 1926 the family immigrated to Canada; there was some illness in the family, so some members were delayed, but by August all were in Manitou, Manitoba  
Active in church work. Johann farmed until his death from cancer in 1949  
Sara developed Parkinson's Disease; she eventually died in Winnipeg 19 October 1959  
Johann had 12 children:

**Helena** - born 26 Aug 1903 in Kronberg, died 18 May 1995 in Winnipeg  
5 years elementary school in Barvenkovo  
3 years *Kommerzschule*; was taught German and Religion by A H Unruh  
To Yalta and Vassilyevka with family  
1926 immigrated to Manitou, Manitoba with family  
1930 married **Gerhard Johann Klassen**; they had been school mates in Barvenkovo  
Their fathers had been partner owners of the *Lutch* factory  
Lived in North Kildonan and Petersfield, participated in church work  
Gerhard died 28 December 1965, Helena 18 May 1995

Katharina - born 5 April 1905 in Kronberg, died 19 October 1905 in Kronberg

Maria - born 5 April 1905 in Kronberg, died 13 October 1905 in Kronberg

Maria - born 23 October 1906 in Kronberg, died 1 February 1910 probably in Vassilyevka

**Peter** - born 13 August 1908 in Vassilyevka  
Moved to Barvenkovo with parents at age 2  
3 years elementary school in Barvenkovo; his teacher was Gerhard Janzen  
To Yalta in 1918, then to Vassilyevka  
Mother died March 1919 when he was 11; there was a new mother and expanded family a few months later, in November 1919  
1926 immigrated to Canada with his family  
Married Margaretha Konrad 18 June 1931, farmed in Manitou  
1938 moved to Newton, Manitoba  
1973 retired from farming and moved to Winnipeg  
Always very active in church work, both Peter and Margaretha alive 2006

**Johann** - born 31 May 1913 in Barvenkovo, died 12 March 1915 in Barvenkovo

**Katharina** - born 11 July 1915 in Barvenkovo, died 18 October 1916 in Barvenkovo

Children of second wife Sara Froese from her first marriage (none lived in Barvenkovo)

Helene, Heinrich, Johann, Abram

Children of the marriage of Johann and Sara (none of these lived in Barvenkovo)

Bernhard, George, Sara, Franz, Kornelius

Johann Peter Froese died 27 June 1949 in Manitou, Manitoba

### **Froese, Kornelius Peter**

Born 22 March 1885 in Andreasfeld

Parents Peter Kornelius Froese, and his second wife Maria Loeppky, fourth child of this marriage

When his parents died in 1901 he completed the one year left of *Zentralschule* in Chortitza,  
then was employed in a farm machinery factory in Schoenwiese  
Spring of 1907 he went to *Forstei* at Razin, here he became a Christian, was baptized and  
joined the MB Church

This alienated his fiancée, who broke off the relationship

After *Forsteidienst* he studied bookkeeping and was employed as a bookkeeper at the flour mill  
of his brothers Peter and Gerhard in Barvenkovo

He was a good worker, faithful, industrious and mild mannered

He accompanied the Peter Froese family when they fled to the Kuban because of the  
Revolution

He died of typhus in the Kuban in 1919

### **Froese, Peter Peter**

Born 12 November 1850 in Andreasfeld

Eldest son of Peter Kornelius Froese and Maria Bock

Childhood and earlier adult life in Andreasfeld

Married **Agatha Pauls**

Peter Peter Froese lived at the end of Andreasfeld, across the road from an implement factory,  
sold groceries to the workers

Built a granary and bought grain from passing farmers

In 1894 Peter, together with brother Gerhard and Aron Lepp (son of Elder Aron Lepp), built a  
steam-powered flour mill in Barvenkovo, his capital was tied up in the mill, so the  
granary business did not do so well

Built new larger mill in 1904, and actually moved to Barvenkovo that year

Peter owned the first automobile in the area

In unsettled times Peter, wife Agatha, brother Kornelius and son Peter and his family fled to  
the Kuban. Kornelius, son Peter and 3 of his daughters died there of typhus

To Slavyansk, then to Petrovka

Immigrated to Canada, landing on 21 July 1927, settling first in Main Centre, Saskatchewan,  
then Altona and in 1930 moved to Winkler, Manitoba

Wife Agatha died of cancer 24 August 1931

A few years before his death Peter joined the Mennonite Brethren Church, he died in Winkler  
on 26 June 1943

Had 8 children, of whom only 2 reached adulthood:

**Agatha** - born 17 April 1881 in Andreasfeld

Married Johann Epp in 1900

Lived in Andreasfeld, then moved to Petrovka near Barvenkovo

Fled in unsettled times, then returned

Via Moscow to Canada in 1930

Moved to Winnipeg as widow in 1940, died 26 September 1968 in Winnipeg

**Peter** - born 29 November 1884 in Andreasfeld

Married **Katharina Paetkau** 9 October 1905

Moved to Barvenkovo and worked at the flour mill of his father Peter and uncle  
Gerhard

2 sons and 4 daughters born in Barvenkovo

**Peter** - born 20 September 1906, died 3 September 1907

**Peter** - born 26 March 1908, died 16 April 1986

**Katharina** - born 8 April 1910, died January 1920 - typhus

**Agatha** - born 12 November 1911, died 27 January 1920 - typhus

**Helena (Lena)** - born 31 August 1913, died 25 January 1920 - typhus

**Emma** - born 5 June 1915, died 2 February 1916

Heinrich - born 7 March 1918 in Kamenskaya

Moved to Kamenskaya about 1915, where Peter again worked in a flour mill

Fled to the Kuban in unsettled times, likely 1919, with parents and own family

Peter and 3 daughters died of typhus in 1920 in the Kuban

Peter died 20 February 1920

In 1926 mother Katharina and sons Peter and Heinrich immigrated to Canada

Lived in Saskatchewan and Manitoba

### **Harms, Mr**

Wife **Mrs Harms**

Daughter **Elisabeth** - born in Barvenkovo 22 March 1914

### **Huebert, Jakob**

Wife **Mrs Huebert**

#### **Children**

Jakob was conductor of the Barvenkovo Church choir

For a time the church services were held in his home

Jakob was son of M Huebert of Neukirch, Molotschna

Mentioned as living in Barvenkovo in January 1905

### **Janzen, Eva**

Home was Vassilyevka

Took seamstress training course in Barvenkovo

Sang in the Barvenkovo Church choir

Later married John P Wall

### **Janzen, Gerhard**

On the picture of the Barvenkovo youth group

### **Janzen, Jakob**

On the picture of the Barvenkovo youth group

### **Janzen, Johann**

Wife **Mrs Janzen (nee Martens)**

#### **2 daughters, son**

Came from teaching position in Herzenberg; after the war returned to Herzenberg

Teacher likely 1909-1917; leader of youth group together with A H Unruh

Quite possibly the people visited by the M Hueberts of Neukirch in 1904, the family, including

2 daughters and son, providing beautiful music accompanied by the harp and guitar

### **Kirkhan, Katharina**

Children:

**Heinrich**

### **Rudolph**

Immigrated to Canada, landing in Quebec 1 May 1927, settling in Davidson, Saskatchewan

### **Klassen, Abram J**

Born 3 December 1884 in Ohrloff, Molotschna

1893 parents moved to Spat, Crimea

He was a teacher at village of Ebenfeld

Served in the Alt-Berdyansk *Forstei*

October 1910 married **Agnes Goerz**

Spent 1 year in Barvenkovo in a Froese mill to learn the business

After that opened own business in Spat

With onset of World War I drafted as *Sanitaeter*, served first in Simferopol, then in Sanitorium in Szaki, a *Kurort* in Crimea

After conclusion of the war was elected as minister in Spat, and was appointed as a member of the *Kommission fuer Kirchenangelegenheiten (KfK)*

Arrested, imprisoned in Simferopol, sentenced to 10 years in exile in 1930

Died in exile 5 July 1931

### **Klassen, Cornelius Abraham**

Born 6 May 1883 in Kleefeld, Molotschna

Parents Abraham Johann Klassen and Cornelia Toews

Completed Pedagogical Course at the Halbstadt Teachers Institute

Taught 3 years at Tokultschak (Johannesruh) in the Crimea

Tutored, probably some adults, and taught school in Barvenkovo 1907-1909

Likely taught in the private Mennonite elementary school

Salary 700 rubles per month

In 1909 he taught in the nearby village of Vassilyevka

On 10 May 1910 married Margaretha (Grete) Funk in Friedensfeld, presiding minister being Abram H Unruh of Barvenkovo

The following year Cornelius continued to teach in Vassilyevka, then in Kantemirovka

Moved to Siberia in 1917 to farm, Cornelius died 27 July 1919 of typhus

### **Klassen, Gerhard Johann**

Immigrated to Canada, landing in St John 24 March 1927

### **Klassen, Johann Johann**

Born 4 February 1869 in Petershagen, Molotschna

Widowed father with 9 children moved to Schostak in 1889

Johann married **Aganetha Derksen** 9 November 1893; they lived in Schostak

Moved to Malvinovka (Petershof) in 1901

Then moved to Vassilovka (Vassilyevka?) in 1904; experienced spiritual revival here

Sons showed interest in machinery, moved to Barvenkovo in a covered wagon, in 1910, and with 2 partners, Johann Froese and Bernhard Dueck, established a factory to produce agricultural and industrial machinery, called *Lutch* Factory

1914 started building wagons and equipment for the medical corps

Wife Aganetha died in a typhoid epidemic of 1920

Johann married Aganetha's sister, **Katharina**, in 1921

Johann was leader of the MB Church in 1925

Immigrated to Canada 1 October 1925

Church life was very important to Johann, the North Kildonan Mennonite Brethren Church  
was soon started in the Klassen home

Johann died 3 June 1941 in Winnipeg

Children:

Simon - born 19 May 1885, died 12 November 1895

**Johann** - born 19 May 1895, died 24 February 1920 of typhus

**Abram** - born 9 March 1897

Completed *Kommerzschnule*, then studied engineering at the University at  
St Petersburg

Married Sofia (Sonja) Luchia, a Russian nurse

Worked in the Mennonite office in Moscow

Died 20 December 1925 of complications of appendicitis in Moscow

**Agatha** - born 23 August 1898

Went to *Kommerzschnule*

Never married, died 31 July 1975

**Aganetha** - born 10 December 1899

Worked at *Bethania Heilanstalt*

To Canada 1927

Married Jakob Reimer at age 39, died 4 August 1982

**Jakob** - born 20 September 1901

Did not go to *Kommerzschnule*, but went to work in the factory

Keen interest and skill working with machines, especially the lathe

As son of the former owner he was dismissed from the factory when the  
government took over

Jakob and brother Gerhard then started their own machine shop repairing cream  
separators

Married Maria Langemann

Established machine shop in Winnipeg, died 13 January 1995

**Gerhard** - born 25 May 1903

Married Helena Froese, daughter of factory owner Johann Froese

Went to *Kommerzschnule*, interested in youth work, was musical.

When Jakob was dismissed from the *Lutch* factory, Jakob and Gerhard  
established their own machine shop repairing cream separators

To Canada in 1926, died 28 December 1965

**Maria** - born 18 September 1904

Early became a mission-minded Christian

Married Jakob Wiens

In time they started a chicken farm in Winnipeg, died 29 December 1980

**Cornelius** - born 6 May 1906

Life-long interest in music, choral and instrumental, an interest passed on to his  
children



Married Maria Janzen, died 2 December 1991

**Dietrich** - born 29 July 1907

Schooling interrupted by war and revolution

Married Gertruda Langemann, died 8 April 1988

**Katharina** - born 7 May 1909

Married John Spenst, died 6 April 1997

**Anna** - born 23 March 1911 in Barvenkovo

Married Victor Wilms, died 27 December 2004

**Erna** - born 2 July 1914 in Barvenkovo

Nurse, MCC volunteer 1947-1949

Never married, died 16 February 2003

Only 2 children were born in Barvenkovo, but the whole family lived there for a time

### **Klassen, Johann G**

Owner of a small steam-powered flour mill

Koop brothers

For the school year 1910-11 three Koop brothers attended at Barvenkovo

Parents were Heinrich H Koop and Susanna Giesbrecht, from the Don River region

**Heinrich** - born 13 April 1897 went to *Kommerzschule*

**Johann (Hans)** - born 20 Feb 1901 went to *Dorfschule*, but dropped out after Christmas

**Peter** - born 19 Dec 1902 went to *Dorfschule*, he eventually died in Winnipeg in 1990

### **Lepp, Aron Aron**

Born 5 September 1861 in Einlage

Parents: Aron Peter Lepp, Elder of the Einlage MB Church, and Katharina J Siemens

Aron was the ninth of 15 children, and preceded by 3 Arons, who died as infants

Aron married **Katharina J Froese**, probably about 1884

Lived in Andreasfeld, where the first child Anna was born in 1885

Moved to Nikolayevka in 1888

In 1893 (94?) Aron entered a partnership with Peter and Gerhard Froese, who were building a flour mill in Barvenkovo, so the family moved to that city

Participated in the formation and function of the Barvenkovo MB Church. He was elected and ordained as a deacon

In the spring of 1909 Aron sold his share of the flour mill to his partners and moved to Omsk, Siberia, where he built his own flour mill

The mill did not do well, so he sold it in 1912, and built a farm implement factory. In both of these enterprises his son-in-law, Franz Peter Froese was employed as bookkeeper

In 1913 Aron bought farm land, 301 dessiatines, about 12 miles south of Omsk

He gave this land to his two daughters, Anna Froese and Katharina Janzen, as inheritance (this despite the fact that the land was not entirely debt-free)

The daughters moved onto the land in the spring of 1914; they called the estate Ekatherinovka Both husbands were drafted into the *Forstei* 1914-1917, so the wives had to manage the farms in their absence

Wife Katharina died in 1911

Daughter Anna with husband Franz immigrated to Canada in 1924

One daughter moved to California; possibly following her, Aron must have also migrated to California, where he died 3 October 1935

Children:

Anna - born 1885 in Andreasfeld , died 19 May 1947 in Winnipeg

Married Franz Peter Froese

**Katharina** - died in Podolsk

**Helena** - died in Paraguay

**Unnamed** -

Katharina - born in Omsk in 1910, died 1961 in Los Angeles

Married Gerhard Wiens

### **Lepp, Jakob**

Likely the son of Aron Peter Lepp, and brother of Aron Aron Lepp

In 1903 he operated a "water cure" institution, probably something like a spa

He had taken some training in Dresden

Now could cure almost anything, according to a letter to the *Mennonitische Rundschau*

Needed to have the facilities enlarged

### **Loewen, Maria**

On the picture of the Barvenkovo youth group

### **Martens, Kornelius**

Family had a share in an implement factory

Went to *Kommerzschule* in Barvenkovo

Then to University in Moscow for 5-6 years

### **Nickel, Helena Gerhard**

Refugee arrived in Quebec, Canada 1 August 1925 on the *Empress of Scotland*

Went to Arnaud, Manitoba

### **Nickel, Jakob**

Appointed a bookkeeper at the large Froese flour mill

Was also a minister, and served the church

Later moved to Millerovo, where he owned a mill

### **Penner, Jakob**

Owner of a *Schlichtmuehle*.

Had a daughter Maria who married Jakob Peter Froese

The son-in-law became a co-owner of the business

### **Peters, Anna**

Daughter **Helena**

Immigrated to Canada, landing in Quebec 1 May 1927, settled in Davidson, Saskatchewan

### **Peters, Peter**

Minister in the MB Church, some time 1903-1918

### **Redekop, Jakob Franz**

Born 23 July 1895 in Petrovka, near Barvenkovo

*Dorfschule* in Petrovka, *Kommerzschule* in Barvenkovo 1909, 1910

Boarded in the home of his teacher, A H Unruh

Baptized and joined MB Church in 1913

Immigrated to Canada with his parents in 1913

**Reimer, Gerhard**

Born 4 May 1885

Son of Johann Reimer of Wiesenfeld

Married Katharina Gerhard Froese of Barvenkovo 16 June 1912

Studied commerce at the University in Kiev, then at Saratov

Back to Barvenkovo in 1916, then had to serve in the *Sanitaetsdienst* in Moscow

Fled Barvenkovo with Gerhard Froese family in 1918, to Tchongrav, Crimea

Here he taught Bible School, German, logic, psychology, and directed the choir

First child Gerhard born 1919. Katharina died 1921, secondary to haemorrhage

Gerhard married Margaretha Enns in 1924, and they had 2 more children

**Schellenberg, Anna and Johann**

Picture of the Barvenkovo youth group shows 2 Schellenbergs

**Schellenberg, Johann**

Minister in the MB Church, some time 1903-1918

**Schmidt, Klaas B**

Wife **Mrs Schmidt**

**Children**

Klaas Schmidt died of heart failure (*wassersucht*) on 3 June 1911 at the age of 55 years

Funeral, with widespread participation, was held in the church on Sunday afternoon on 5 June

Minister Abraham H Unruh used Isaiah 38:1 as text "Set thine house in order: for thou shalt die, and not live."

**Siemens, Gerhard**

Likely the leading minister when the MB Church was established

**Siemens, Johann Jakob**

Born about 1910, refugee in Moelln, Germany, in January 1930

**Thiessen, Gerhard**

Born 13 October 1878 in Chortitza

**Aganetha** (?) (wife) from Waldheim, Molotschna

Moved to Barvenkovo some time before 1909

Children born in Barvenkovo

**Helena** - born 9 March 1909

**Peter** - born 16 October 1912

**Malvina** - born 28 September 1913

**Adina** - born 10 October 1916

**Hanna** - born 15 May 1918

**Elisabeth** - born 8 April 1921

**Thiessen, Mr**

Engineer at the *Lutch* factory, drove the first prototype tractor in 1915, turning sod with its plough

**Unger, Mr**

Wife **Mrs Unger**

Funeral of a **12-year-old son** of the family was held 25 May 1904

## **Unruh, Abraham Heinrich**

(see separate biography)

Born in Crimea, village of Temir- Bulat, 5 April 1878

Parents Heinrich Benjamin Unruh and Elisabeth Wall, minister father died when he was 5

Brought up by his uncle, Kornelius Unruh, teacher in Ohrloff *Zentralschule*

Completed Ohrloff *Zentralschule*, and the 2 year teacher training course in Halbstadt

Received teacher certificate at age 17

Began teaching career in *Dorfschule* in Crimean village of Menlertschick 1895-1903

1900 married **Katharina Toews** of Spat, Crimea

Mother **Elisabeth Unruh** stayed with them until 1920, she helped in the household

Taught in the Barvenkovo elementary school and *Kommerzschule* 1903-1915

Ordained to the ministry in the MB Church in 23 May 1904 at the Vassilyevka church, Elder

David Schellenberg presiding

1915-1917 served in *Sanitaetsdienst*, then back to teaching in Barvenkovo

Anti-German sentiment quite strong in Barvenkovo

Was asked to be principal of Mennonite *Zentralschule* in Karassan in 1918

1920 joined the faculty of the newly-established Bible School in Tschongrav

Bible School shut down by the government in 1924

Immigrated to Canada in 1925

Started Winkler Bible School that autumn, and continued to teach there for 19 years

Mennonite Brethren Bible College opened in 1944 with Unruh as president. He

relinquished that post in 1 year, but continued teaching another 10 years

Well-known Bible teacher and speaker across Canada. Wrote extensively, including a history of the Mennonite Brethren Church

Increasing difficulty with diabetes and the complicating loss of vision

Moved to BC in 1959

Preached his last sermon in Chilliwack, BC on 26 December 1960

Died quietly 15 January 1961 of bronchopneumonia

Wife Katharina died 7 March 1963

Children:

**Elisabeth** - born 4 October 1901 in Menlertschik, died 20 July 1903 in Barvenkovo

**Abraham** - born 20 October 1903 in Barvenkovo, died 7 September 1980 in Winnipeg

**Kornelius** - born 14 October 1905 in Barvenkovo, died 1909 in Barvenkovo

**Johann** - born 20 June 1908 in Barvenkovo, died 2004 in Canada

**Katharina** - born 20 June 1910 in Barvenkovo, died 23 May 1993 in St Catharines, Ontario

**Victor** - born 27 September 1914 in Barvenkovo, died 18 July 1944 over France, navigator of an aircraft

**Heinrich** - born 8 February 1917 in Barvenkovo, died 30 June 1988 in Kamloops, BC

Lydia - born 10 February 1920 in Karassan, Crimea, died 23 December 1983 in Chilliwack, BC

## **Unruh, David Heinrich**

Owner of a machine factory

**Unruh, Helena (Lena)**

On picture of youth group of Barvenkovo

**Unruh, Kornelius Heinrich**

Wife **Martha**

Missionary to India. Brother of Abraham Unruh

Stayed in Barvenkovo for some time between mission assignments

On 18 July 1904 preached in the Barvenkovo church with the theme "We are afraid, but not in despair."

Departed via train on 20 July 1904, heading for Hamburg, Germany, then on to India by ship

**Warkentin, Dietrich Johann**

Born about 1885

Wife **Maria** - born about 1893

Children:

**Katharina** - born about 1921

**Elisabeth** - born about 1922

**Margaretha** - born about 1923

Immigrated to Canada in 1924, settling in Altona, Manitoba

**Weier**

Three brothers Weier, **Johann**, **Jakob** and **Dietrich** in a letter ask for funding of 2,000R to obtain passes, presumably to leave the USSR. Published in *Mennonitische Rundschau* 20 March 1929

**Willms, Johann**

Teacher

Was able to give "lectures" at the MB Church, to help out when ministers were not available



The Bernhard Dueck Family

Back row - first left Johann P Froese, second right Bernhard  
Bernhard Dueck, factory owner

Second row - first left Sarah Dueck, later Mrs Johann A Froese,  
then Mrs Johann P Froese

second left Katharina (nee Dueck) Froese (Mrs Johann P Froese

fourth left Helene (Mrs Bernhard) Dueck, mother of Sarah

and Katharina, guardian of Aron P Froese

Reclining - Aron P Froese



Froese brothers:

back row: l to r: David, Bernhard, Aron

front row: l to r: Kornelius, Jakob



Gerhard Peter Froese and wife Anna (nee Penner)



Peter Peter Froese and wife Agatha (nee Pauls)





Johann Peter Froese



Agatha, Helena (Lena) and Katharina Froese,  
daughters of Peter Peter Froese, son of the mill  
owner Peter Froese. All died of typhus in the  
Kuban in 1920

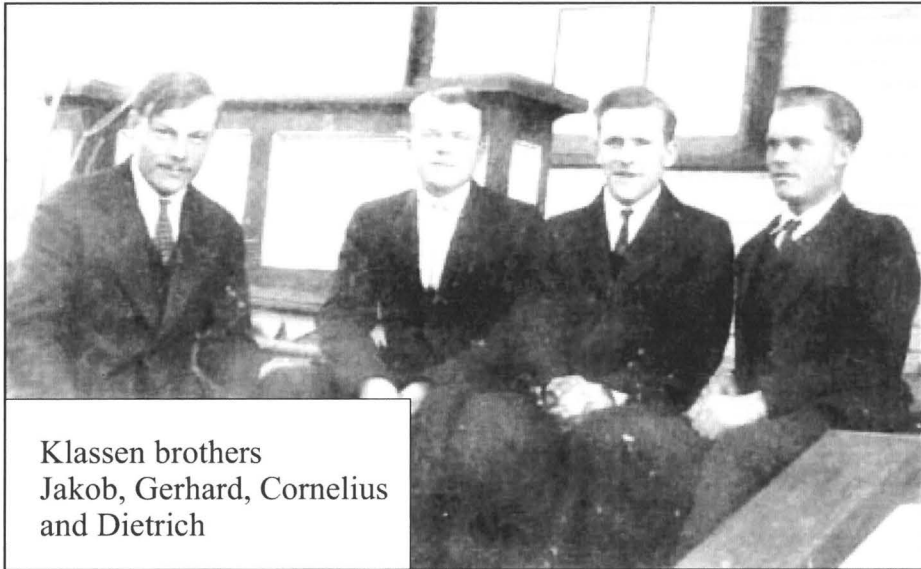


Johann J Klassen family (1916)

front row l to r: Katharina Derksen (became stepmother)

Katharina, Aganetha, Erna, Johann, Anna, Agatha Derksen (grandmother), Cornelius

back row l to r: Dietrich, Maria, Gerhard, Agatha, Abram, Johann, Aganetha, Jakob



Klassen brothers  
Jakob, Gerhard, Cornelius  
and Dietrich



Klassen sisters  
Aganetha, Erna, Maria  
Anna, Agatha  
and Katharina

## MENNONITE INSTITUTIONS

### Elementary School (*Dorfschule*)

Founded in 1903

Abraham Heinrich Unruh was appointed the first teacher in 1903; likely stopped teaching in this school when he started teaching at the *Kommerzschnule* in 1909

Building had not yet been constructed when Unruhs arrived

For a time Unruh conducted the school in their own living quarters, but this became too stressful for the family

A mill owner and deacon of the MB Church, Gerhard Peter Froese, put rooms at the disposal of the school, likely in his mill

A building was constructed, on land purchased adjacent to the large Froese flour mill, to serve both the school and the MB Church, in 1906. School was at one end of the building, church at the other, with a movable wall in between. Construction included quarters for the teacher, three rooms and a kitchen. A student knows that the school playground was close to the mill; they were playing a game similar to baseball called "pollack" and lost a ball on top of the four-story mill. They did not get the ball back!

Cornelius Abraham Klassen was likely a teacher 1907-1909; he also did some tutoring, likely of adults. He was single at the time. Pay was 700 rubles per month

Johann Martin Janzen was a teacher, likely 1909-1917; he also worked with the church youth

Gerhard Janzen was teacher, at least from 1915-18

In 1910-11 there were 40 students, 21 girls, 19 boys

There were likely 2 teachers, one male, one female

In 1913 there were 44 students

The school probably shut down when many of the leading Mennonites fled from Barvenkovo

### *Kommerzschnule*

Founded in 1909

"Operated by the Russians in co-operation with the Mennonites"

Abraham Heinrich Unruh appointed instructor in German and Religion. He taught religion to the approximately 40 Mennonite students at the school

Unruh had obtained the required certificate to be the German language instructor, taking private tutoring from his well-educated brother, Benjamin

Teachers were men of considerable learning; Unruh found the academic atmosphere stimulating; the standards were high, but not run on Christian principles, especially the social life of the students

Unruh worked to establish the possibility of freedom of conscience for the students who had a Christian heritage

Head of the school was a well-recognized educator, Professor Barnoff

He insisted on meticulous records of lessons taught and assignments given

Every 2 weeks faculty met to discuss pedagogical questions

Abram Klassen, son of Johann Johann Klassen, was teacher for some time after 1918

Peter Epp was added to the faculty at the request of A H Unruh for more advanced studies in

German

Abram Froese from outside Barvenkovo was a student 1918-19

Mennonite contribution to the *Kommerzschule* will have stopped soon after the Revolution, but the school likely continued to function

### **Mennonite Brethren Church**

The Naumenko Colony was founded in 1890, largely by Mennonite Brethren from the Chortitza and Molotschna colonies. A considerable number came from Andreasfeld, which was affiliated with the Einlage MB Church

In time a number of people, largely industrialists, settled in the neighbouring city of Barvenkovo to start various business enterprises

First fellowship in Barvenkovo likely started soon after Froese brothers, Peter and Gerhard, established their flour mill in Barvenkovo in 1894

Mennonite Brethren in Barvenkovo at first seem to have travelled to Vassilyevka (10 verst distance) or Petrovka (15 verst), but then started meeting in Barvenkovo itself

First meetings were in rooms provided by Gerhard Froese in their flour mill

Gerhard Siemens was likely the initial leading minister; Gerhard Froese and Aron Lepp were deacons

In 1903 “leading brethren” of the Barvenkovo congregation approached Abraham H Unruh to establish an elementary school at Barvenkovo. He came that same year, beginning classes in his own home. When that was not satisfactory, rooms were provided by the Froese brothers, likely in their flour mill

It is likely the Barvenkovo congregation which elected Abraham H Unruh as minister; he was ordained 23 May 1904 in the Vassilyevka MB Church by Elder David Schellenberg. Unruh served the Barvenkovo congregation in many capacities; he certainly often preached; in time he was the leading minister

A piece of land was purchased adjacent to the Froese mill in 1906 for the construction of a church/school. This also included living quarters for the teacher, three rooms and a kitchen. It is quite possible that the Unruhs lived here for a time. J Dick, engineer at the Froese flour mill, played a part in this construction, in particular designing a movable wall between the church sanctuary and the school portion

The various industrialists recruited personnel for their businesses which could also be active in the church. Minister Jakob Froese for example, was employed by the *Lutch* factory. Jakob Nickel, also a minister, was appointed bookkeeper for the Froese mill. He then later moved to Millerovo

The preaching ministry at Barvenkovo was always a concern; serving at various time were:

Gerhard Siemens, likely the leading minister for a time, Peter Peters

Abraham H Unruh, teacher at the elementary school, after 1909 in the *Kommerzschule*

Jakob Nickel, bookkeeper at the Froese mill, moved to Millerovo

Johann Willms, teacher, was able to give “lectures;” moved to Millerovo

Jakob Froese, employed by the *Lutch* factory, Johann Schellenberg

David Derksen, had a business dealing with musical instruments

Visiting ministers such as Baptist minister Lehmann and J Schinke, and itinerant

### Mennonite Brethren ministers

Various church programs were:

Two worship services every Sunday

Youth group - Abraham H Unruh was one of the leaders. At one time the group had 26 members; teacher Johann Martin Janzen also helped in this work 1909-1917

Choir - Jakob Huebert was the conductor. The choir even travelled to neighbouring churches to participate in song festivals

Sunday School

Ladies' Group

Bible Study

A difficult problem was the question of allowing people not baptized by immersion to participate in communion. The local congregation favoured it, but the more conservative Naumenko parent church did not

As a whole the church grew steadily, including the time during World War I, when business flourished

Elder Hermann A Neufeld visited Millerovo, Barvenkovo, Borissovo and Memrik on his round of itinerant ministries in 1915, also visited the entire Naumenko Colony, including Barvenkovo in December 1917

With the Revolution and the onset of the civil war, however, many of the leading members fled or moved away. The atmosphere in the city was definitely anti-German. Gerhard Froese, for example bought a small farm in the Crimea, Peter Froese fled to the Kuban, Abraham H Unruh accepted a teaching position in Karassan, Crimea

With the departure of the leaders, there still remained some members of the church, so services carried on for some time, often with considerable blessing

In 1926 it was reported that despite loss of membership through immigration to Canada there were still church services with preaching, Bible studies and prayer meetings. Surrounding Russians were being actively evangelized

Also in 1926 it was reported that a Russian minister Volkov from Tscherbinovka preached at the church a number of times. Early April he had meetings for five days. After the second day a revival broke out, and 25 people were saved, among them both Mennonites and Russians

9 May 1926 a special youth festival was held. The weather was excellent and the large room could not hold all the attendees; some had to stand outside. There were songs by the local choir, reinforced by people from beyond Barvenkovo; poems were recited. A drama "Judging the Bible" culminated in a powerful defense of the Bible by Minister Volkov. Everyone present became convinced that the Bible really was God's word, and the only book through which one could clearly discern God's will. The Bible tells us who we are, and how we can be rescued from our depraved state, in order to win salvation. It was hoped that the seed which was planted that day would bear fruit.

The church was likely disbanded about 1930

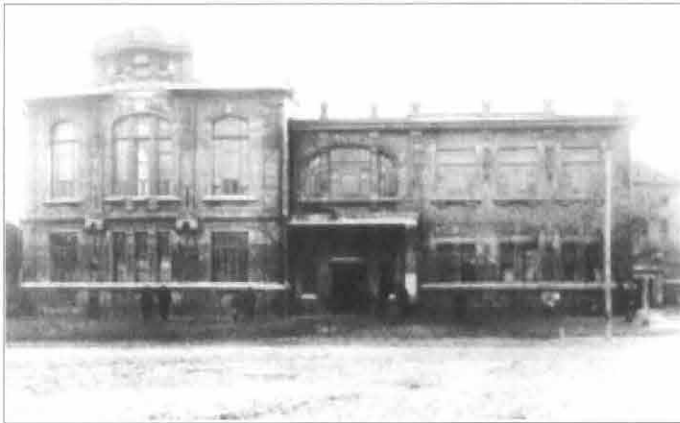
### Mennonite Cemetery

By 1904 the Mennonites had purchased a small cemetery. In 1904 there were 15 graves

## Schools in Barvenkovo



Elementary School 1910-1911



Barvenkovo *Kommerzschnule* in 1911



*Kommerzschnule* faculty in 1912, Abraham Unruh  
back row, fourth from the right



## MENNONITE BUSINESSES

### **Derksen, David**

Owned a business dealing with musical instruments

### **Epp, Heinrich**

Owned a smaller steam-powered flour mill

The business was valued at 40,000 rubles according to the 1908 *Forstei* taxation list

### **Froese Flour Mill**

Owned by: Peter Peter Froese

Gerhard Peter Froese (brothers)

Aron Lepp (son of Elder Aron Lepp) - probably an acquaintance from

Andreasfeld days. He left the partnership in 1909 and moved to the Omsk region

Started in 1894, located in the northern part of Barvenkovo

A much larger 4-story steam-powered flour mill was built in 1904, costing 140,000 rubles

Length of building, including granaries, 22½ fathoms (157½ feet)

Building of masonry construction; highly decorative brick-work; large windows; roof covered over by metal

After 1904 likely functioned as one business with 2 mills on the property (the old, smaller mill, and the new larger mill)

Building no longer exists, probably destroyed during World War II

### **Froese, Jakob**

Machine business, for a time employed Jakob Peter Froese

### **Klassen, Johann G**

Owned a smaller steam-powered flour mill

### **Klassen Machine Shop (Jakob and Gerhard)**

After Jakob Klassen was dismissed from *Lutch* Factory when the government took over,

Jakob and Gerhard Klassen established their own machine shop repairing cream separators.

Needed parts for separators were not available, and had to be specially milled

At one time worked with 18 different kinds of separators

### **Klassen Millet Shelling Mill**

When Johann Johann Klassen was no longer involved with the *Lutch* factory he bought a

large building across the street, rebuilt one end as living quarters, the other end as a millet shelling mill

### **Lepp, Jakob**

By 1903 had trained in Dresden, now was operating a "water cure" establishment, likely something like a spa

Writer of a letter to the *Mennonitische Rundschau* claimed Lepp could cure almost anything.

Facilities crowded, so a larger building was needed

### **Lutch - Agricultural and Industrial Machine Factory**

Owned by: Johann Johann Klassen, Johann Peter Froese and Bernhard Bernhard Dueck

Established in 1910 to produce agricultural and industrial machinery

*Lutch* is Russian word for ray, as in a ray of sunshine

Three former farmers wanted to capitalize on the growing market for farm machinery and mill equipment

Selected Barvenkovo as the site for their factory: many flour mills, low-cost Ukrainian labour, surrounded by fertile farmland

Bought 2.5 dessiatines adjacent to the railway station. Two large buildings, the manufacturing plant and the foundry

The manufacturing plant housed 2 departments:

Agricultural Department - the larger of the 2 sections

Produced reapers (over 100 built), binders, threshing machines, ploughs (over 100 built) and developed 2 prototype tractors by 1915. Mr Thiessen, engineer, drove the first tractor out and started to break up sod with its plough

Industrial Department - produced cast iron piping, boilers, fly-wheels (up to 2.5 m in diameter)

Foundry

Furnace to melt the metal for casting

Used sand and ground casting methods

Techniques limited to cast iron

Engine house with a motor supplied power to all departments through pulleys

Had a 140 foot smokestack

Houses of the three factory owners were on the back of the property

The Dueck house probably the best; he knew the most about building houses

Beside them was the watchman's cottage (his name was Sultan)

Also on the yard was a barn, an office and an open space to park machines

The whole yard was enclosed in a high board fence

Grew quickly; skilled labour done mostly by Mennonites or German tradesmen

Assembly and labour done by local Ukrainians

Employed up to 120 workers

In 1912 or 1913 had a fire, starting in the paint shop, destroyed much of the factory except the foundry

The factory was rebuilt

After 1912 economic conditions deteriorated, factory went heavily into debt

In 1914 started building wagons and equipment for the medical corps

In 1915 dropped the name *Lutch*, according to a government requirement which supposedly did not allow trade names

1916 sold to local Russians from Kharkov. When the Revolution started the new owners disappeared, so the ownership reverted back to Klassen, Froese and Dueck

After WWI taken over by the communist government. They made a show of actually purchasing it. Final payment to Johann Froese was enough to purchase a new pair of shoes for his wife

Johann Froese was offered temporary employment, since they needed him to help run the company

By 1926 back in production

Renamed *Krasny Lutch* (Red Ray)

Became main industry in Barvenkovo; perhaps shut down in 1995, but in 2000 and 2003 was still operating, although on a very limited scale

**Penner Flour Mill**

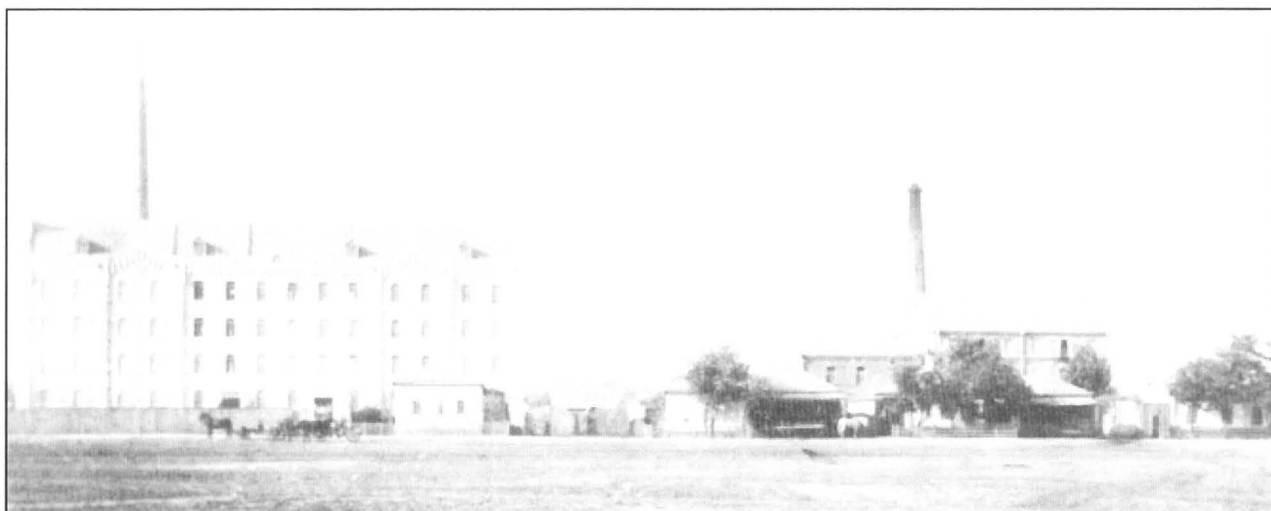
Jakob Penner owned a *Schlichtmuehle* (planer mill) which only did rough grinding of grain

Had a daughter Maria, who married Jakob Peter Froese

Jakob Peter Froese became co-owner of the business

**Unruh, David Heinrich**

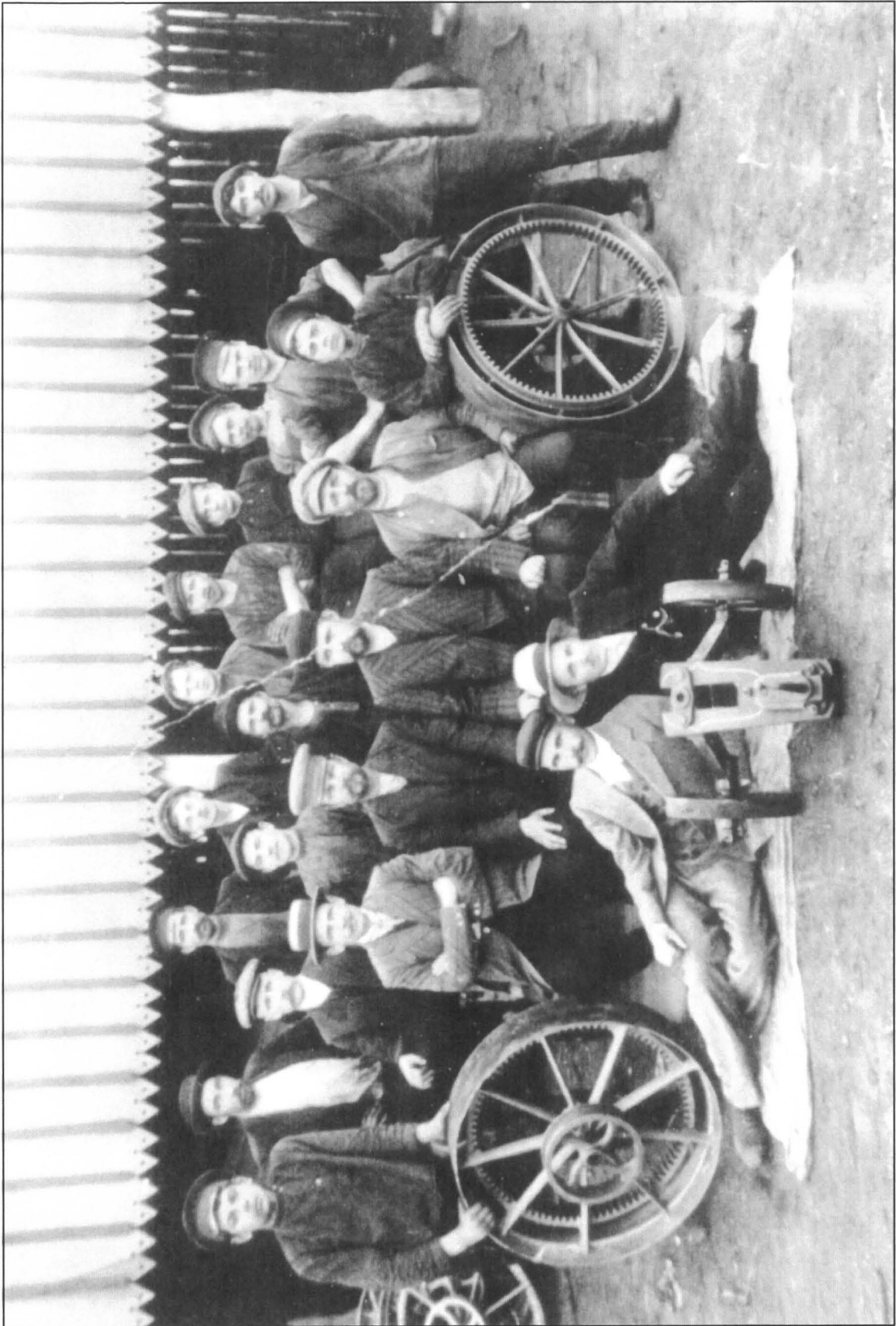
Owned a machine shop



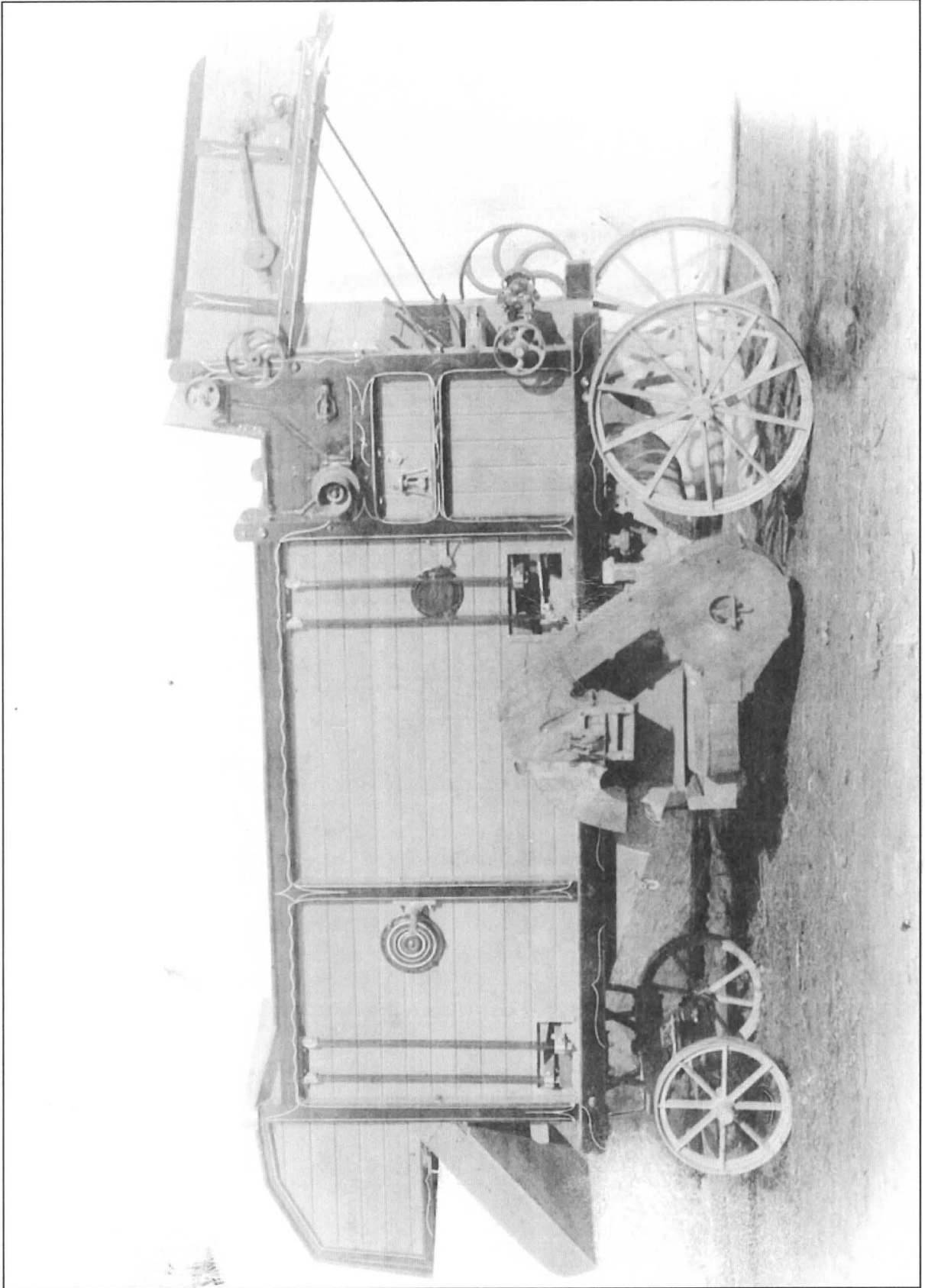
Two steam-powered flour mills belonging to Peter and Gerhard Froese



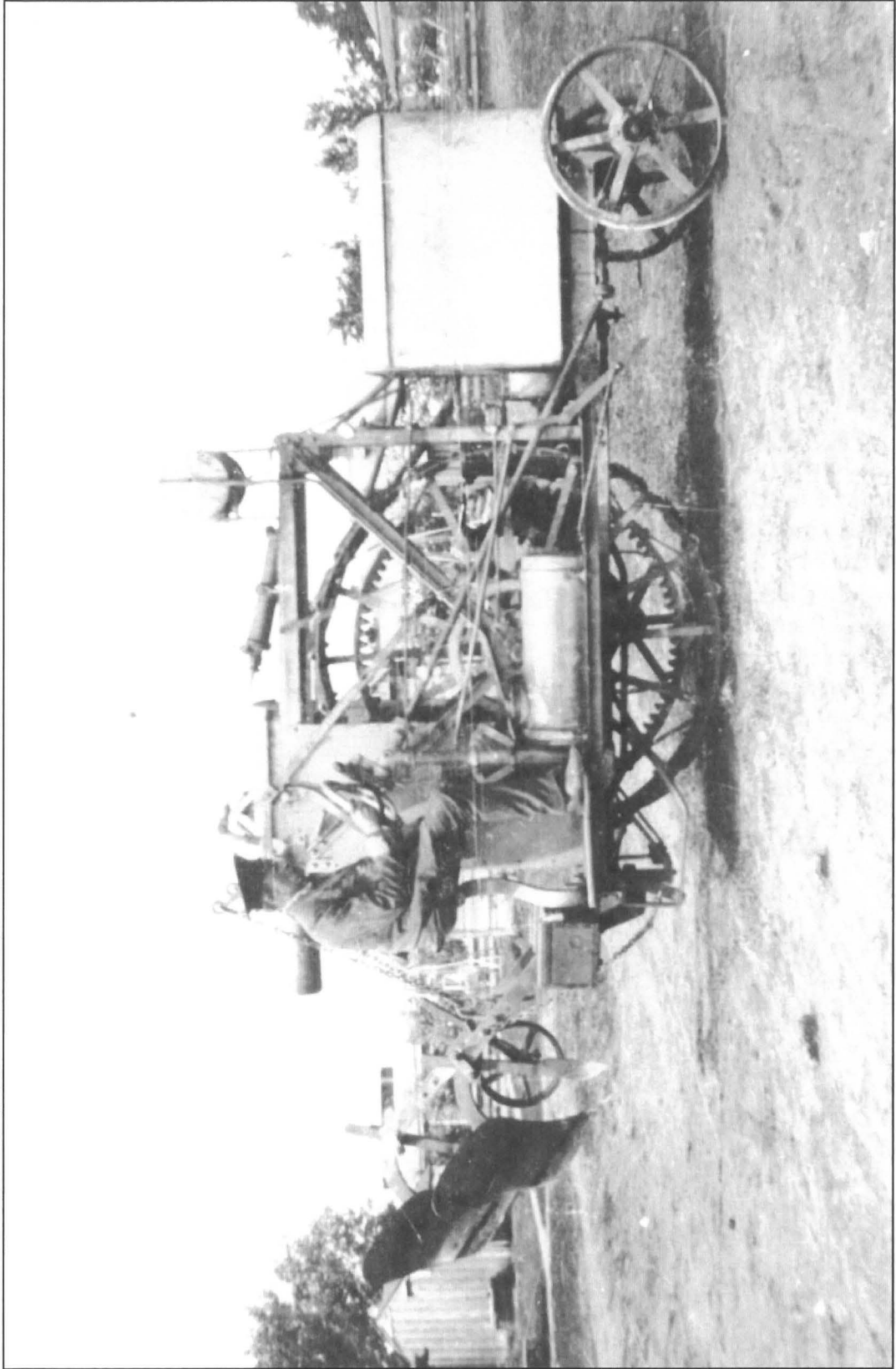
Machine shop of David Heinrich Unruh



*Lutch factory workers showing some of their products*



Threshing Machine built by the *Lutch* factory



One of two prototype tractors built by the *Lutch* factory in 1915



**MENNONITE ESTATES  
IN THE BARVENKOVO REGION**

**Doerksen, Julius Peter**

Estate Maryevka (Doerksen)

100 dessiatines

Doerksen contributed 80 rubles to needy mobilized Mennonites in 1917

**Friesen, Peter Gerhard**

Estate Nadeschdovka

50 dessiatines

**Janzen, Heinrich Heinrich**

Address: Barvenkovo, Kharkov

100 dessiatines

**Klassen, Johann Jakob**

Estate Saparovka

450 dessiatines

**Nickel, Gerhard Heinrich**

Estate Maryevka (Nickel G)

225 dessiatines

**Nickel, Peter Heinrich**

Estate Maryevka (Nickel P)

225 dessiatines

It is quite probable that there was initially an Estate Maryevka of 450 dessiatines owned by a Heinrich Nickel, which was then divided equally between 2 sons, Gerhard and Peter

**ABRAHAM HEINRICH UNRUH**  
(1878-1961)



Abraham Heinrich Unruh

Abraham Heinrich Unruh was born 5 April 1878 in the Mennonite village of Temir-Bulat, north-eastern Crimea. His parents were Heinrich Benjamin Unruh and Elisabeth Wall. Abraham was the seventh of ten children. Two older brothers, Heinrich and Kornelius, became missionaries in India; Gerhard became a minister of the Mennonite Brethren Church in Canada. Younger brother Benjamin was a prominent educator and Mennonite statesman.

Father Heinrich was minister of the local Mennonite congregation, then was chosen elder. The family did not do well financially, partly because of the poor soil in the region, but also because Elder Unruh spent much time serving his widespread congregation. In 1883 Heinrich died of a serious attack of bronchitis, leaving wife Elisabeth with a large family to manage, but having few financial resources. Abraham was then 5 years old.

Foster homes were found for some of the children, and so Abraham had to leave his own home in the Crimea to live with his uncle in the Molotschna. Uncle Kornelius accepted his nephew gladly and often helped him, although his wife often made life miserable for little Abraham. Kornelius Unruh was probably the best-educated man in the Molotschna and helped Abraham academically; he was also a man of high moral principles and integrity. He was principal of the Ohrloff *Zentralschule* for 32 years.

Abraham went to *Dorfschule* in the neighbouring Tiege, where Isaak Ediger was the headmaster. Ediger was an exacting schoolmaster, but also a thoroughly dedicated Christian. Noting that Abraham was a precocious lad, he gave him extra help, so that he completed his elementary education in 5 years. Abraham then entered *Zentralschule* at Ohrloff, where his Uncle Kornelius was principal and one of the instructors. Other outstanding teachers were Johann Braeul and Johann Janzen. Abraham, through these excellent educators, received a solid foundation in the basic academic disciplines of the day. He completed his course of studies in three years. At the age of 15 years Abraham enrolled at the Halbstadt Teachers College. He now lived in a dormitory with no parental guidance and no effective authority for his personal life. Since Abraham was still not firmly grounded in his life of faith, he found this somewhat unsettling.

While the faculty at the Teachers College did not seem to be concerned about the spiritual life of the students, they did teach Abraham self-discipline and effective methods of controlling students. Various theories of education were evaluated; verbal communication was tested and tried. The rhetoric he learned, combined with his native ability, later helped him not only in the classroom, but on the pulpit.

After graduation in 1894 Abraham sat for his Russian state exams, which would give him

the certificate required for teaching. He failed the exam in Berdyansk and also in Melitopol, but had better luck in Pavlograd.

On 18 September 1895 Abraham Heinrich Unruh stepped to the front of his first classroom in the little Crimean Mennonite village of Menlertschik. It was situated about 5 verst from the larger Mennonite village of Spat. Despite his young 17 years he was able to win the confidence and respect of the villagers.

After spending 12 years in the Kornelius Unruh home, Abraham was on his own. His mother, perhaps feeling guilty that she had given him away at the tender age of five, offered to take care of his household. Nothing could have pleased him more.

Abraham had high moral principles, but did not yet have assurance that God had accepted him as a child. The itinerant Mennonite Brethren minister, Jakob Reimer, had previously influenced him in this regard. Finally after evangelistic services held by Jakob J Martens, director of the *Armenschule* in Ufa, Abraham was able to publically call on the name of the Lord. Some time later he fully grasped that he could do nothing, but was entirely dependent on Jesus' blood for righteousness. He applied for membership in the Mennonite Brethren Church, but did not wait until the official meeting to give his testimony. His pupils were the first to hear. He started arranging youth meetings and organized a church choir, although he did not consider himself to have particular musical talent. After outlining his spiritual growth to the Spat Mennonite Brethren Church, he was baptized by immersion in the Salgir River.

The Menlertschik villagers, regardless of their particular Mennonite persuasion, were delighted that Abraham assumed the role of spiritual leader among the youth. In later years he attributed much of his spiritual growth to his praying mother. He also gained considerable insight from his reading, largely German writings in the Pietistic tradition. He read books by Samuel Keller, P Smith and R A Torrey, as well as sermons by Spurgeon. The Christian life to Abraham meant faithfulness to his daily work, good relationships with other people, integrity as well as confessing his faith to other people.

Abraham constantly refined his teaching methods and improved his competence the eight years he taught in Menlertschik. He took some courses at Simferopol and Perekop, perfecting his knowledge of Russian and mathematics; he even tried to develop his musical skills. Though exercising the usual discipline, he tended to befriend his students more than most teachers did; as a result he could be proud of his well-behaved and industrious students. He also enjoyed the monthly teachers' conventions.

In time Abraham noticed a young lady who, with her parents, attended the Spat Mennonite Brethren Church. The fact that she often sang solo parts for the choir may have made it easier to notice Katharina Toews, daughter of a well-to-do family. Soon Abraham had the conviction that Katharina should be his bride, and she agreed. They were married in 1900, Abraham being 22 years old at the time. Elder David Duerksen of Spat officiated at the wedding, his text being "This is the day that the Lord has made," (Psalm 118:24). Katharina contributed much to the management of the household, particularly in the more practical details. For a time she was ill, suffering from tuberculosis, but happily she recovered. Mother Elisabeth Unruh stayed with the couple, but with a reduced work load; she remained in the household until about 1920.

Abraham came to the attention of some of the leading men from Barvenkovo at a music festival he attended. They asked him to become their new elementary school teacher. So it was that

the Unruh family moved to Barvenkovo, near Kharkov, in 1903. The school building had not yet been constructed when they arrived, so for a time Abraham conducted school in their own living quarters. This made it difficult to run a household, until mill owner Gerhard Froese put rooms at the disposal of the school. Since there were about 20 Mennonite families in Barvenkovo at the time, there could well have been about 30 students; by 1913 there were 44 scholars. In 1906 a building serving both school and church was completed; one end was the school, the other end the sanctuary. The building was near the large Froese flour mill; one student remembers losing a ball on the roof of the four-story mill. Accommodations for the teacher were included in this construction, so the Unruh family may have lived there for some time.

Abraham had in the meantime received private tutoring in his teaching subjects from his well-educated younger brother Benjamin. This enabled him to obtain his certificate as language instructor.

In 1909 a seven-class *Kommerzschule* was opened in Barvenkovo, operated by Russians, in cooperation with the Mennonites. Abraham was appointed teacher of German and Religion. He was stimulated by interacting with fellow instructors who had high academic interests and expectations. The Barvenkovo *Kommerzschule* was not run on Christian principles, but Abraham was able to ensure that freedom of conscience was allowed for those students who had a Christian upbringing.

Abraham and Katharina had 8 children, 6 born in Barvenkovo:

1. Elisabeth - born 4 Oct 1901 in Menlertschik, died 20 July 1903 in Barvenkovo
2. Abraham - born 20 Oct 1903 in Barvenkovo - missionary in India, died 7 Sept 1980 in Winnipeg
3. Kornelius - born 14 Oct 1905 in Barvenkovo, died 1909 in Barvenkovo
4. Johann - born 20 June 1908 in Barvenkovo, died 15 Jan 2002 in Toronto, Ontario
5. Katharina - born 20 June 1910 in Barvenkovo, died 23 May 1993 in St Catharines, Ontario
6. Victor - born 27 Sept 1914 in Barvenkovo, died 18 July 1944 over France, navigator of an aircraft
7. Heinrich - born 8 Feb 1917 in Barvenkovo, while Abraham was away as a *Sanitaeter*, died 30 June 1987 in Kamloops, BC
8. Lydia - born 10 Feb 1920 in Karassan, Crimea, died 23 Dec 1983 in Chilliwack, BC

Abraham's older brother Kornelius spent some time during a furlough with the Unruhs in Barvenkovo, and was particularly helpful when tragedy struck the family with the death of daughter Elisabeth. He and his wife returned to India, leaving Barvenkovo by train in July of 1904.

With World War I raging, Abraham joined the *Sanitaetsdienst* in 1915. He was posted to fill an office position, first in Ekaterinoslav, later at the port city of Odessa. Abraham was a large man, so he had to have his uniform tailor-made. The usual belts were too short, so that two had to be sewn together - giving him the nickname "two belt *Sanitaeter*."

After two years of service, in 1917, the Revolution broke out, and the war for Russia was brought to a close; service as a *Sanitaeter* was at an end. The returning Black Sea Fleet sailors resented that they, according to their estimation, had borne the brunt of the hardship of war while the *Sanitaeter* had sat comfortably at home. Abraham became the spokesman for his colleagues, pointing out that they too had gone through dangers and suffering; the sailors were pacified. Abraham returned home to his family.

Anti-German feeling had surfaced in Barvenkovo. While Abraham was away on government

business the family was not molested, but after the outbreak of the Revolution resentment included even his family. All the Mennonites for a time found refuge on a nearby Mennonite estate. When the Unruhs returned they found that their house had been ransacked. Abraham's papers and books had been torn to shreds and piled up in the middle of the living room. Poking around in the debris they found an envelope containing 100 rubles which the robbers had missed. It had previously been designated as tithe money, and Abraham insisted that this use not be changed, despite the desperate family circumstances. Abraham advised the members of the church not to take back their belongings by force if they saw someone else with them.

While Abraham had been involved with the schools, he also played a vital role in the local Barvenkovo Mennonite Brethren Church. The neighbouring Naumenko Colony, consisting of the villages Elenovka, Petrovka and Vassilyevka, was established in 1890, largely by Mennonite Brethren. There were a number of meeting places in the colony, notably in Vassilyevka, and there were a number of Mennonite Brethren ministers. Organizationally the Naumenko church was a subsidiary of the Einlage Mennonite Brethren. Mennonite Brethren, largely in some form of business, had moved into Barvenkovo, so a small congregation was also organized there, likely at the turn of the century. Prominent were members of the extended Froese family, largely from Andreasfeld, as well as a Klassen family. It was probably Gerhard Froese, deacon of the congregation, who had first asked Abraham to establish the new elementary school in Barvenkovo.



Abraham Unruh with the Barvenkovo youth group

Abraham played a leading role in the church, and according to the wishes of the local congregation was ordained to the ministry on 23 May 1904 by Elder David Schellenberg. Abraham shared this important day at the Vassilyevka Mennonite Brethren Church with a baptismal service, involving 20 candidates.

Although there were other ministers involved with the Barvenkovo Mennonite Brethren Church, such as Gerhard Siemens, Johann Schellenberg and Peter Peters, Abraham must have been considered the leader when it came to trouble. Mill owner Gerhard Froese had inspirational meetings for his employees. On one occasion, in May of 1909, an evangelistic preacher was unexpectedly added to the program; someone complained. The police arrested and imprisoned Gerhard Froese, and presumably because he was responsible for Mennonite Brethren spiritual activity in Barvenkovo, also Abraham. Appeals went as far as St Petersburg, and the two were released after 21 days. Abraham, although by his own admission not a skillful musician, seems to have been involved with the choir at Barvenkovo, and was active among the young people.



Abraham was increasingly aware of the anti-German feeling in the largely Russian/Ukrainian community. The increasingly blatant antireligious atmosphere at the *Kommerzschule* was also difficult to deal with. When he received an offer to be principal of the *Zentralschule* in Karassan, Crimea, the Unruhs saw this as a God-given opportunity. They sold their house to a Russian buyer and prepared to leave. Travel was not easy in those tumultuous times. Abraham hired a freight railway car and loaded all their belongings onto one end. The other end was arranged as living quarters for the whole family, including Abraham's mother, who still lived with them. Here the family slept, ate and whiled away the time as the train slowly headed south to the Crimea.

Karassan was an important Mennonite centre in the Crimea. The large *Zentralschule* was located on a square in the middle of the village. It had developed into a first-rate school, which by 1918 was co-educational. While being Mennonite, it was not at all certain that all of the teachers were Christians. Abraham faithfully fulfilled his duties as teacher and principal. More and more, however, he came to the conviction that his true purpose in life was to proclaim the Good News. He had become a good friend of Elder Hermann Rempel of the Mennonite Church; the two of them often visited neighbouring villages to conduct preaching missions. When in 1920 a call came to join the faculty of the newly founded Bible school in Tchongrav, Abraham accepted. The Unruh family moved to Tchongrav.

It is likely at this point that Abraham's mother went to stay with her daughter, Mrs. Kornelius Baerg, in Tiege, Molotschna. Abraham stayed in touch with her, even bringing her a sack of flour during the famine of 1922. When she died in the autumn of 1922 Abraham remarked, "Until this day I knew every day: I have a mother who is praying for me. Now I have no mother."

Returned missionary Johann G Wiens, who had completed seminary training in Hamburg and London, was the first instructor at the new Bible Seminary (later renamed Bible School) established in Tchongrav in the autumn of 1918. Thirty-four students came from all over Russia. Heinrich J Braun was soon appointed the second faculty member, followed by Gerhard Reimer. Abraham, although not having as much formal education as some of the other teachers, had developed into an effective expositor of the Scriptures. Quite providentially the Unruhs had previously invested in a property in Tchongrav, and so had easy access to a place to live.

The school had received permission to operate from General Peter Wrangel while the Crimea was occupied by his White Army. The school used the church building in Tchongrav, which was attached to the village school. It was co-educational, and accepted only those students who were serious about their studies and were willing to work through the three-year program. Basically, with a few modifications, the curriculum was that of the Hamburg Baptist Seminary. It included study of both German and Russian grammar. Abraham apparently quoted his uncle Kornelius, who had quipped, "The devil is against grammar, for he knows that it only makes for a better understanding of the Scriptures."

When the Communists took full control of the Crimea all students and faculty were arrested and committed to trial. Charges were proven to be false, partly by the testimony of the local Russians. In March, 1924, however, the local authorities decreed that the school should be closed. Petitions that the school be allowed to re-open were successful at the central government, but unfortunately the local authorities did not actually permit this to happen. So the 50 students had their studies rudely interrupted, this time permanently.

Reluctantly Abraham came to the conclusion that in the long run it would be better to leave

Russia. Through gracious donors, funds were supplied for the family to leave. Documentation was somewhat difficult to come by, but eventually through the work of son Abraham and brother Benjamin the family was able to leave. Via Riga, Germany and The Netherlands they reached their ship at Antwerp. They crossed the stormy sea on board the *SS Minnedosa*, to land in St John, New Brunswick in January of 1925. Later that year the Unruh family moved to Winkler, Manitoba.

Abraham felt that Bible teaching was also necessary in Canada. He began his first Bible school in his new home country in the autumn of 1925. The first year only 13 students enrolled. Until Christmas Abraham taught alone, then was joined by another colleague from Tchongrav, Gerhard Reimer. In 1927 Johann G Wiens, the former principal from Tchongrav, was added to the faculty. The curriculum again followed that of the transplanted Hamburg Baptist Seminary program of Tchongrav, of course minus the Russian language studies.

Abraham led the Bible school, later known as the Winkler Bible Institute, for 19 years. He preached in Mennonite churches throughout Canada and the United States, being particularly sought after for Bible conferences. He edited a small paper called *Die Antwort* (The Answer), and produced Sunday School material. He was active on a number of conference boards.

For some time the Mennonite Brethren of Canada had felt the need for a school of higher theological education. In 1942 an Education Committee of the Canadian Conference was elected, which first recommended that an advanced class be added to the curriculum of the Winkler school.



John B Toews (left front), Abraham Unruh and some board members at MBBC

In time, because Winnipeg was geographically more central and had a large Mennonite Brethren community, the committee recommended that a new school be established in that city. In 1944 after a "many sided discussion," delegates at the Canadian convention voted in favour of this recommendation. And so the Mennonite Brethren Bible College (MBBC) was established. The Conference, in a unanimous vote, asked Abraham to be the president. A suitable building was found at 77 Kelvin Street (later called Henderson Highway) in Winnipeg, and in the autumn of 1944 classes began. Despite a small enrolment and graduating class, the closing exercises at the end of the first year attracted widespread participation.

After one year Abraham realized that the school needed a president who could relate effectively with the English-speaking Mennonite

Brethren. He asked the board to release him from administrative duties and appoint John B Toews as president. Abraham continued on as professor of Biblical Studies for another ten years; at the age of 76 years he retired from his active teaching ministry.

In the meantime Abraham continued to preach and teach across the whole conference. He also wrote a number of books. Among them were: *Die Mennonitische Bibelschule in Tchongrav*, *Kurzgefasste Einleitung in die heiligen Schriften Alten Testaments*, *Predigtenwuerfe*, *Des Herrn Mahnung an die Gemeinden der Endzeit*, *Gottes Wort als Wegweiser fur die Gemeindegzucht*, *Der*



*Prophet Jesaja and Die Geschichte der Mennonitenbruedergemeinde.*

In July of 1959 the Unruhs moved to the home of their daughter Lydia Friesen in Chilliwack, BC, but then in August of 1960 settled in Clearbrook. Abraham's diabetes made his last years difficult, increasing blindness making it first hard, then impossible to read and write. He delivered his last message in Chilliwack on 26 December 1960 on the text "We saw his glory." He was slated to preach in Clearbrook on 6 January 1961, but could not make it. He was admitted to hospital; his condition gradually worsened, and he died quietly at 6:30 AM on 15 January 1961 of bronchial pneumonia. So passed into eternity, to face the Master whom he loved, a man of God who had served the church for over 50 years. The funeral was on 20 January with many mourners present. Among the speakers was Dr F C Peters, Canadian Conference moderator. He mentioned the love of Abraham as brother, his faithfulness as servant, and his work in the kingdom of God.

Abraham's dear wife Katharina followed him in death on 7 March 1963.

Sources:

*Canadian Mennonite Encyclopedia*, on-line

Ewert, David, *Stalwart for the Truth*, Board of Christian Literature, General Conference of Mennonite Brethren Churches of North America, Winnipeg, Canada, and Hillsboro, USA, 1975, many pages

Friesen, P M, *Die Alt-Evangelische Mennonitische Bruederschaft in Russland (1789-1910)*, Raduga, Halbstadt, Taurida, 1911, pp 450-51

*Mennonitische Rundschau*

Obituaries:

Unruh, Abraham H - 15 February 1961

Unruh, Katharina - 4 December 1963

Toews, H P, *A H Unruh, D D, Lebensgeschichte 1878-1961*, Publications Committee of the Canadian Conference of Mennonite Brethren Churches, Winnipeg, Canada, 1961, many pages

Unruh, A H, *Die Geschichte der Mennoniten-Bruedergemeinde 1860-1954*, Committee of Reference and Counsel, General Conference of Mennonite Brethren Churches of North America, Hillsboro, USA, 1954, many pages

Unruh family information - Peggy Regehr (granddaughter), Winnipeg, Canada

## SOURCES

(for the entire Barvenkovo chapter)

Albrecht, Henry, *Our Heritage: The Descendants of Franz and Heinrich Albrecht*, December 1991, many pages

*Barvenkovo - My Native Land*, 350 year anniversary of the city and 80 year anniversary of the region booklet, published in 2003

Canadian Mennonite Board of Colonization Extraction Project

*Canadian Mennonite Encyclopedia*, on-line

*Der Bote*

Obituaries:

Albrecht, Nikolai - 18 November 1931, p 2

Refugee Lists:

4 November 1925, p 3; 17 March 1926, p 7; 20 April 1927, p 4; 1 June 1927, p 4

17 August 1927, p 4

*Der Botschafter*

List of contributors to the *Bethania Heilanstalt*, 24 February 1912, p 5

Durksen, Martin, *Die Krim war unsere Heimat*, self-published, Winnipeg, Canada, 1977, pp 190-197

Epp, George K, "Urban Mennonites in Russia," in *Mennonites in Russia* edited by John Friesen, CMBC Publications, Winnipeg Canada, 1989, pp 247-48

Ewert, David, *Stalwart for the Truth*, Board of Christian Literature, General Conference of Mennonite Brethren Churches of North America, Winnipeg, Canada, and Hillsboro, USA, 1975, many pages

EWZ Lists: Mennonite extracts

Family Histories and Memoirs:

*What Is My House? The Story of the Peter K. Froese Family*, 1987

*From Russia With Love...Memoirs of Margaret and Peter Froese*

*Leaving a Legacy. Treasuring the Rich Christian Heritage of the Johann Klassen Family*

*Peter, A Man of Stamina and Courage*. Based on the writings of Peter H Koop, 1979

*Jahresbericht des Bevollmaechtigten der Mennonitengemeinden in Russland in Sachen der Unterhaltung der Forstkommandos im Jahre 1908*, p 11, 12, 13, 18, 20

*Friedesstimme*

Reports:

Death of Klaas B Schmidt, 18 June 1911, p 8

Friesen, Edith Elisabeth, *Journey Into Freedom*, Raduga Publications, Winnipeg, Canada, 2003, pp 108,109

Friesen, P M *Die Alt-Evangelische Mennonitische Bruederschaft in Russland (1789-1910)*, Raduga, Halbstadt, Taurida, 1911 pp 450-51, 469

Friesen, Rudy with Friesen, Edith Elisabeth, *Building on the Past*, Raduga Publications, Winnipeg, Canada, 2004, pp 77, 676-679

*Great Soviet Encyclopedia*, Volume 2, p 648

Harms, Wilmer A, *The Odyssey of Escapes From Russia*, Hearth Publishing, Hillsboro, Kansas,

- 1998, p 181
- Huebert, Helmut T, *Mennonite Estates in Imperial Russia*, Springfield Publishers, Winnipeg, Canada, 2005, pp 86, 124, 129
- Klassen, John, Winnipeg, Canada, personal information and pictures
- Klassen, Robert Jay, *The Parable of the Wheat Plant and the Sunbeam*, Essay about the Lutch Factory written as a school assignment, 1979
- Klassen, Robert L, *Life and Times of a Russian-German Mennonite Teacher: Cornelius A Klassen (1883-1919) and Beyond*, self-published, pp 35, 36, 72-75, 88, 89
- Klassen, Sarah, Winnipeg, Canada, personal information
- Lohrenz, Gerhard, *Heritage Remembered*, CMBC Publications, Winnipeg, Canada, 1974, p 111
- Mennonite Encyclopedia* and *Mennonitisches Lexikon* entries for Barvenkovo and Nauvenko Colony
- Mennonitische Rundschau*
- Letters to the editor:
- 6 May 1903, p 4
- 28 September 1904, p 5
- 20 March 1929, p 5
- Immigration lists:
- 4 March 1925, p 20
- 9 March 1927, p 15
- 29 January 1930, p 6
- Obituaries:
- Unruh, Abraham H (minister) - 15 February 1961
- Unruh, Katharina (widow) - 4 December 1963
- Neufeld, Elder Hermann A and Katharina, *Their Story*, The Autobiography of Elder Hermann A and Katharina Neufeld, in Russia and Canada, translated by Abram H Neufeld, Centre for Mennonite Brethren Studies in Canada, Winnipeg, Canada, 1984, pp 72, 82, 92, 98
- Quiring, Walter and Bartel, Helen, *Als Ihre Zeit Erfuellt War*, Saskatoon, Canada, 1963 pp 62-63
- Toews, H P, *A H Unruh, D D, Lebensgeschichte 1878-1961*, Publications Committee of the Canadian Conference of Mennonite Brethren Churches, Winnipeg, Canada, 1961, many pages
- Toews, J A, *A History of the Mennonite Brethren Church*, Board of Christian Literature, General Conference of Mennonite Brethren Churches, Fresno, USA, 1975, pp 90-91, 248
- Unruh, A H, *Die Geschichte der Mennoniten-Bruedergemeinde 1860-1954*, Committee of Reference and Counsel, General Conference of Mennonite Brethren Churches of North America, Hillsboro, USA, 1954, pp 195-198, 259-62, 335
- Unruh family information - Peggy Regehr (granddaughter of Abraham H Unruh), Winnipeg, Canada
- Volksfreund*, 10 January 1918, p 7

# Chapter II

## BERDYANSK

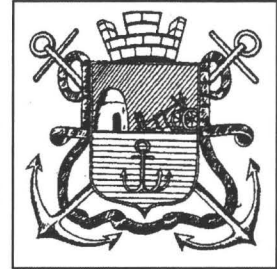
### TABLE OF CONTENTS

Table of Contents.....	52
History of Berdyansk.....	53
Plan of Berdyansk in 1862.....	59
Berdyansk Buildings in 1862.....	60
Berdyansk Buildings, Institutions and Port.....	61
Map of Berdyansk “Rayon”(1972).....	65
Map of Berdyansk City (2000).....	66
Berdyansk Institutions.....	67
Crimean War Adventure.....	68
List of People.....	71
List of People for 1942.....	151
Pictures of People.....	152
Mennonite Institutions.....	157
Mennonite Events.....	161
Migration of the 1870s.....	165
1870s Migration Ships.....	170
Mennonite Businesses.....	171
Advertising and Pictures of Mennonite Business Establishments.....	175
Berdyansk Region Estates.....	180
Biography of Cornelius Janzen (Jansen) (1822-1894).....	182
Biography of Elder Leonhard Abraham Sudermann (1821-1900).....	193
Biography of Heinrich Abram Ediger (1863-1943) and Alexander Heinrich Ediger (1893-1938?).....	203
Sources.....	215

## HISTORY OF BERDYANSK

Berdyansk is a port city situated on the Sea of Azov, eastern part of the Zaporozhye Oblast, and is the southern terminus of the Zaporozhye-Berdyansk railway line. It is about 50 km east-south-east of the former Molotschna Colony.

The city was founded in 1827 on the site of the Nogai-Tatar village of Kutur-Ohla near the mouth of the Berda River. It developed on a low flat area between the sea and an escarpment which runs parallel to the sea. With the encouragement of Count Vorontsov, governor general of Taurida Province, it was developed into a port in 1836, particularly meant to serve as a facility for exporting wheat from the large German and Mennonite settlements in the region. At one point a storm had seriously flooded the city and caused much damage, so granite stones were hauled across the ice one winter to form a strong breakwater, thus protecting the port. Berdyansk was incorporated as a city in 1837. By 1840 the population reached 3,500. In 1842 it became a county city for the Taurida Gubernia. Total land given to the city was 9,000 dessiatines; some of this was rented out to help defray the expenses, such as taxes. Eighteen dessiatines were laid out as a city garden.



Berdyansk crest

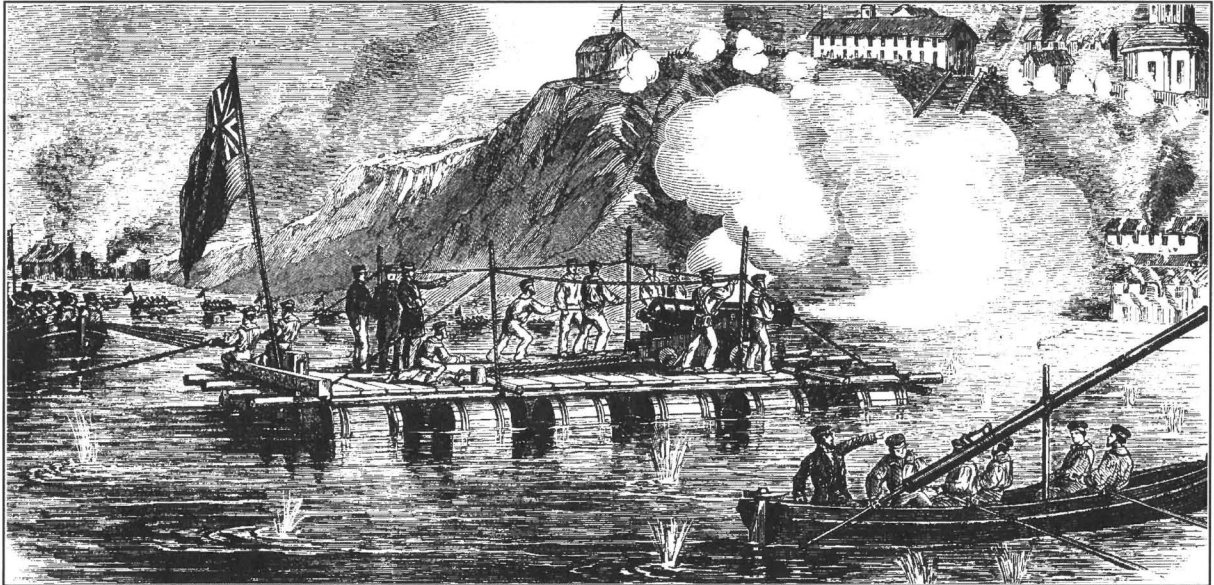
Berdyansk lies at about 47° latitude North. Mean July temperature is 24°C; winters are mild with January mean temperature at -4°C; annual precipitation is 380 mm. Sometimes, however, there can be cold spells. On 9 March 1912 it was reported that the port was icebound. A strong northwest wind together with the work of the icebreaker *Rhede* allowed the port to be opened to navigation, as attested to by the arrival of a fishing vessel from Kerch. Quite a crowd had gathered to watch the ship break up the  $\frac{3}{4}$  arschin (53 cm) thick ice.

In the 1830s 50 garden plots were laid out on the east side of the city, each  $\frac{3}{4}$  dessiatines in size. Since the local citizens did not embrace the opportunity to occupy this land, settlers from the neighbouring Mennonite colonies were solicited. Mennonites from the Molotschna and the Chortitza Colonies, as well as settlers directly from West Prussia, accepted the invitation. That part of the city was named *Nemetskaya Sloboda* (German Colony). Two central lots were saved for the building of a church and a school. This area was actually the first Mennonite suburb of any city in Russia. In time the garden plots were all occupied, so a further 50 dessiatines were designated to be garden plots. Mennonites received land for a cemetery in this region. Additional expansion on the seven kilometre road to the Cossack village of Petrovsk was called *Makorty*.

When the milling, manufacturing and other business potential of Berdyansk became apparent even more Mennonite families resettled. By 1841 there were about 50 families, including some who had migrated directly from the Vistula area. Twenty-four families are specifically listed as having come from the Molotschna; a number of these were businessmen. Eight family units came from Chortitza. Johann Cornies, chairman of the Agricultural Union in the Molotschna, even found it necessary to appoint a regional representative to look after the organizational matters in the city. Peter Bahnmann was the Berdyansk representative on the Molotschna Regional Council in 1851. The Mennonite community grew, that same year numbering at least 200.

The Mennonite presence was felt particularly in business and city politics. Isbrand Friesen

built the first treadmill in Berdyansk in 1840; Abraham Sudermann built another treadmill in 1845. By 1852 there was a considerable number of Mennonite businesses in the city. Jakob Berg, Peter Rempel and Jakob Sudermann had windmills; Isaak Enns owned an oil mill; Jakob Buhler, Cornelius Claassen, David Fast and Johann Rempel had flour mills; Nikolai Wiens and Jakob Isaak Sudermann brokered grain and other products; Julius Wiens was a merchant while Benjamin Wedel was a watchmaker.



The British navy used a raft called *Lady Nancy* carrying a 52-pounder cannon and a whaler boat mounting a Congreve Rocket launcher to bombard Taganrog on the Sea of Azov. Presumably similar tactics were used against Berdyansk  
Drawing is from the *London Illustrated News*

The Crimean War broke out in 1853, Russia on the one side, with Turkey, Britain, France and Sardinia (called the “Allies”) on the other. The British and French fleets entered the Black Sea on 4 January 1854; the invasion of the Crimean Peninsula and the capture of Sevastopol were the primary focus of the war. There were, however, also secondary skirmishes. The war effort was known to be helped by crown peasants and “German” colonists in Melitopol and Berdyansk, since they offered to take charge of some of the sick and wounded. The granaries of cities such as Berdyansk also helped to supply the besieged Russian forces in Sevastopol. Allied ships passed through the strait at Kerch to enter the Sea of Azov on May 22. They destroyed 245 Russian vessels carrying supplies to the Russian army in the Crimea and also attacked and bombarded cities along the north shore of the Sea of Azov. On May 26 the flotilla appeared before Berdyansk, burning some coastal vessels and setting fire to large stores of grain. Berdyansk was again attacked on July 16, and after trying to allow the departure of women and children, the Allies again began to bombard the city in earnest, firing mainly at the forage and corn stacks behind the city. Other cities were also attacked; Taganrog, for example was bombarded by British 52 pounder cannons and rockets.

Mennonites in the city fled, leaving their possessions and business establishments. Many initially took refuge in the nearby Lutheran village of Neuhoﬀnung, then later with relatives in the



colonies. Their businesses would have been particularly targeted by the Allied fleet, since they were some of the most prominent grain brokers in Berdyansk and would have been storing large amounts of grain. The Mennonites returned almost a year later to the devastated city, occupied their homes, and resumed their former endeavors. It was said, "May God grant that we understand the purpose of this divine correction and utilize it for our inner edification." Soon the Mennonite community and the city again thrived. In 1863 the population was 10,000.

David Huebert (Hiebert) moved from Grossweide, Molotschna, to Berdyansk in 1860 and purchased a treadmill; in 1869 he built a steam-powered flour mill. Abraham Jakob Sudermann was a wine merchant. A rope factory started by Wiens and Janzen was later purchased by Peter Riediger. In 1884 a Matthies family established an agricultural machinery factory. Cornelius Janzen was the most prominent of several grain merchants. Heinrich Ediger owned a print shop and book store, and was involved in publishing. He was also a bank director, a member of city council for many years and was mayor for several years. Isbrandt Friesen sold his treadmill during the Crimean War, then served as President of the Berdyansk city administration for nine years; he was also a bank director and an honorary judge.

Mennonites also participated in international affairs. Cornelius Janzen was the Prussian Consul for several years (actual time served is uncertain), while Heinrich Ediger was the Danish Consul early in the 1900s.

In the 1860s another Mennonite suburb of Berdyansk was formed when a number of people settled in the Makorty area. Heinrich Ediger was responsible for the establishment of a school in this district. While they actively participated in general civic affairs, the Mennonites functioned almost as a colony within the city. They had their own schools, administration and elected mayor. As mentioned, the Berdyansk "Colony" functioned as a village of the Molotschna, even having a member on the Molotschna Municipal Council.

Almost from the start a Mennonite church was organized in Berdyansk, initiated when Abraham Isaak Sudermann arrived from Kalthof, West Prussia, in 1841. For several years church services were held in private homes, but after a school was constructed they met in that building. Many of the Mennonites of Berdyansk were still members of the Molotschna Pordenau Mennonite Church, so the group was served by the elder of that church. In 1853 the 47 members of the congregation decided to build a church. Construction began in 1858, but was not completed until 1863; it was a large, airy brick sanctuary. In 1865 the congregation achieved independent status, but in 1876, after many of the leaders such as Elder Leonhard Sudermann had migrated, it became an affiliate of the Gnadenfeld Mennonite Church, then after 1914 was overseen by the Rudnerweide church.

In the 1870s there was a significant move to migrate to the United States, promoted to a considerable degree by Cornelius Janzen and Elder Leonhard Sudermann. Janzen was so enthusiastic that he was actually deported from Russia for his activities. In January of 1877 there were still at least 60 Mennonite family units remaining in Berdyansk, although the migration to the United States was not quite complete. Some later moved to an area called Ngradaftag, others founded the village of Augustable in the Crimea.

Also in the 1870s the railways in this region were developed. The first short railway in Russia was completed in 1837. In time the network was expanded to many parts of the country, emphasis often being placed on industries served. To connect the grain producing areas with the



Black Sea ports was one priority, the Odessa Railway being built in 1870. The Kharkov-Sevastopol line was built in 1875, and it is presumed that the extension to Berdyansk would have come soon after that. Wheat from the Molotschna meant for export was traditionally shipped to Berdyansk by wagons; this laborious process would have been made much easier by sending it, at least part of the way, by rail. In 1914 the travel time from Berdyansk to Ekaterinoslav by train was approximately 12 hours.

Berdyansk seemed to flourish around the turn of the century. In 1908 a concern surfaced. Even though elections were still a year away a person had noted that of the 300 eligible voters, 42 were “German.” The worry was that these might all vote as a bloc. It was countered that if the elected representatives were honest and did not cheat on their taxes (obviously a Duma



Berdyansk about 1910

representative had recently been caught), a person of any nationality could win the election. In 1909 there were 109 Mennonites in the city eligible for *Forstei* taxation, and the total value of their property was valued at one million rubles. They seem to have participated quite actively in the Russian Mennonite community, as exemplified by the placing of frequent advertising in their publications such as the commonly read *Christlicher*

*Familienkalenar*. Jakob Doerksen, for example, claimed tremendous progress (*Ein gewaltiger Fortschritt*) with his Krauss washing machines. Heinrich Ediger touted his printing services as well as the German newspaper *Der Botschafter*. Matthias & Sons advertised their line of agricultural implements. Other Mennonites must have also been interested in some of the services available in Berdyansk such as the mud baths (*Schlammbaeder*) which were located in some shallow lakes five km from the city, five daily trains providing the ten minute ride to the site daily. The season for the baths was from May 20 to August 20. There was also a music school, where it was possible to learn to play piano, harmonium, organ as well as other instruments. Music theory was also on the course of studies as well as singing. Mennonites from out of town probably stayed with relatives, but even so *Gasthaus International* advertised first class accommodations in 1912, with parking spots for wagons and automobiles.

Mennonites participated in the functioning of some of the Berdyansk institutions. A considerable number of young men went to the city *Realschule*. Girls participated in cooking classes. A number of businessmen were on boards of the local banks. The regional court was likely an institution that most people would have avoided, but sometimes it was called upon to settle disputes, in 1911, for example, dealing with a disciplinary matter at the Ohrloff *Zentralschule*. It was felt by historian George Epp that Berdyansk was the first Russian city where Mennonites

became involved in society in a significant way.

In 1905 Abraham Abraham Neufeld moved from Chortitza to Berdyansk to offer his children better educational opportunities. He started his own *Realschule*, and continued as principal until he died in 1909 of a stroke. Peter Peter Fast was then appointed to that position.

In 1907 David H Epp moved from Ekaterinoslav because he was having increasing difficulty publishing his paper, *Der Botschafter*, in that city. He settled in Berdyansk, where he, with the help and support of merchant and publisher H A Ediger, was able to continue his work. Unfortunately all German publications were forced to close down with the onset of World War I, in late 1914.

In 1913 Dr Franz Dyck established a hospital in Berdyansk, called the *Deutsches Krankenhaus*. The official opening of this facility was on February 15.

Up to 1918 the Mennonite community seems to have thrived, but with the Revolution and the subsequent Civil War it began to disintegrate. During the German occupation of Ukraine in mid-1918, the regional commander was based in Berdyansk. The Saxon Field Artillery Regiment Number 79 was the specific regiment involved. With the collapse of the *Selbstschutz* in 1919, and then the White Army in 1921, many used the ports of Berdyansk and Sevastopol to flee across the Black Sea. During this time there must have been intense fighting in the Berdyansk area, with considerable looting and destruction of property as well as loss of life. At least one person from Berdyansk fled to Constantinople by January of 1921; two people are recorded as being in Germany by February 1921, Consul Heinrich Ediger and Vice Consul Alexander Sukkau. With the onset of famine in South Russia Berdyansk seems to have been severely affected. A three-member committee was established to distribute food vouchers in the city: Minister David H Epp, Elder Leonhard Jakob Sudermann and Teacher Peter Wiebe. Beyond that a list of 21 households asked for help through the pages of the *Mennonitische Rundschau*.

On 17 June 1922 Johann Doerksen reported that there were 190 Mennonites remaining in Berdyansk, some of whom were permanent residents, but most were refugees. Many organizations and businesses had been closed by the government on 1 January 1921, and of those still functioning up to 70% of the employees had been laid off. Most Mennonites were therefore unemployed; only six were working. Food aid from America was slow in coming, and three church members actually starved to death. Whoever had property was bartering off what they had for food. Those in houses were breaking them down for fuel, since a pud of coal (36 pounds or 16.4 kilos) cost 800,000 rubles. There was probably still a functioning church in 1922, but no delegate was sent to the General Conference of Mennonite Churches of Russia held in Moscow in January of 1925.

When negotiations were proceeding for the migration of Mennonites to Canada in the 1920s, the original idea was to embark from ports in Ukraine. Unfortunately the two ports in question, Berdyansk and Sevastopol, were both badly silted, so they could not be used. When the departures finally proceeded via Moscow only five people are listed as migrating from Berdyansk to Canada



The ruins of the Abraham Sudermann house in 1923



Modern seaside Berdyansk hotel

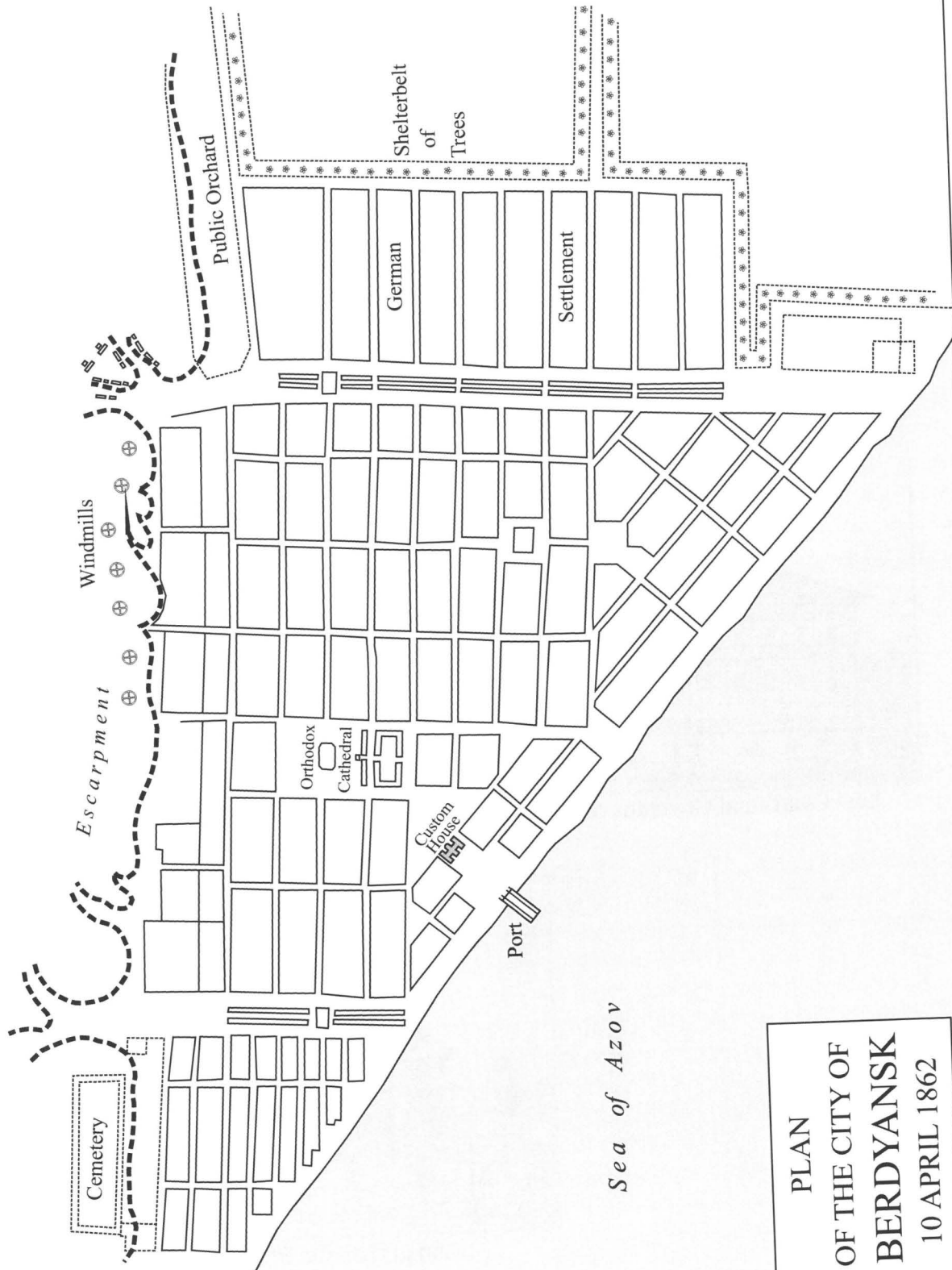
in the 1920s. No person from Berdyansk is listed as escaping via Moscow and Riga in 1929-1930. One person born in Berdyansk seems to have escaped across the Amur River ice; the Heinrich Fedrau family reached Harbin in China in the early 1930s.

The population of the city as a whole declined during this time, dipping down to 26,400 by 1926. There was, however an upswing in the economy of the city due to industrialization in the 1930s. A regional art museum was established in 1930, and the Pedagogical Institute was founded in 1932. For a time during World War II the city was occupied by the German armed forces. At least 18 Mennonites were registered as living in the city in 1942. Some of the Mennonites of Berdyansk did manage to flee during this time. Marie Epp and her son Harry landed in Halifax, Canada in 1948, showing that they had escaped to the West. Peter Sudermann, student in a technical school in Berdyansk in 1941, was able to get to Germany, and eventually to Canada.

From 1939 until 1958 the city was renamed Osipenko, but after that it reverted back to the original Berdyansk. Currently Berdyansk a cable and a road machinery plant, a petroleum refinery and a fibreglass plant. Other industries include clothing, footwear and food, flour milling, fishing and fish processing. The Berdyansk State Pedagogical Institute continues to function, and there is a medical school. The coastal “mud health resort” is still an attraction on the shores of three nearby lakes. It is claimed that almost any medical disorder can be cured by the silt, mud and brine, except tuberculosis.

The current population of Berdyansk is approximately 135,000 (1996 estimate). The city has expanded to include the area of the neighbouring escarpment; this divides it into an older lower region near the sea and a newer section beyond the escarpment. It is still a port of call for ships on the Sea of Azov; there are nine berths in the port, each serviced by railway and road approaches. There is also a passenger terminal.

There is very little to show of the previous Mennonite presence; all of the Mennonite homes along the escarpment of the German area were leveled to make way for industry, but there are still some left in the inner part of the city. There is a Berdyansk Christian Centre; a church youth conference was held in the city in 2003.

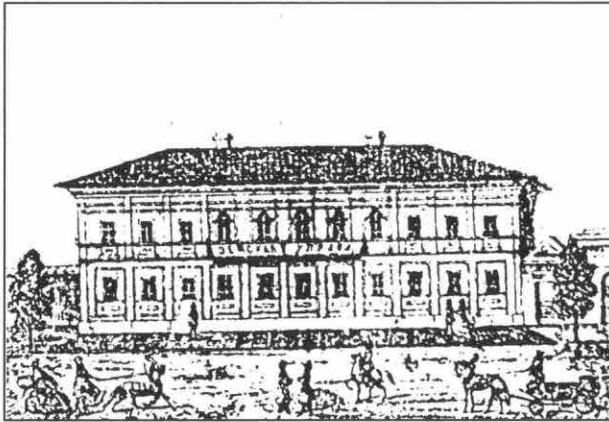


PLAN  
OF THE CITY OF  
BERDYANSK  
10 APRIL 1862

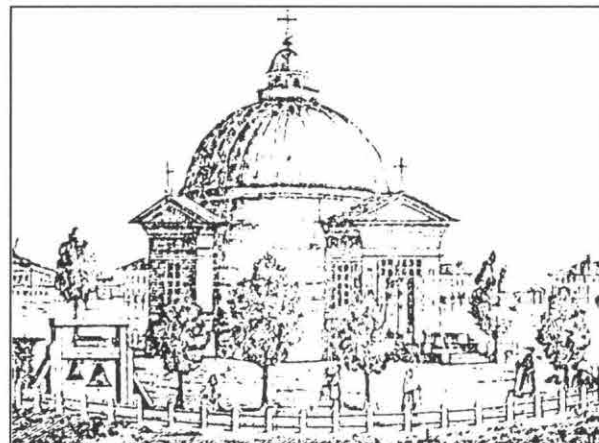
Berdyansk buildings in 1862  
Pictures taken from the corners of  
the 1862 Plan map



Orthodox Cathedral

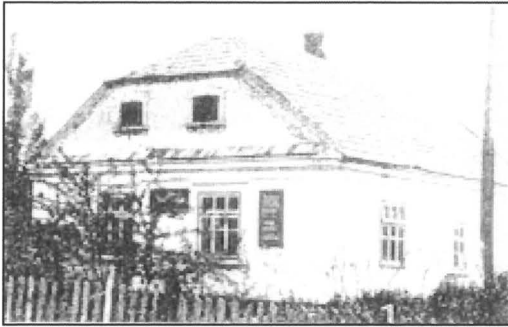


Law Courts and Government Building



Roman Catholic Basilica

## Berdyansk buildings and institutions



Mennonite elementary school, showing  
Molotschna type school architecture



The Matthias residence, now  
being repaired



*Realschule*



"German" students at *Realschule* in Berdyansk  
Members of the final year class in 1910



Mennonite girls taking a cooking class in Berdyansk



## Berdyansk City Scenes

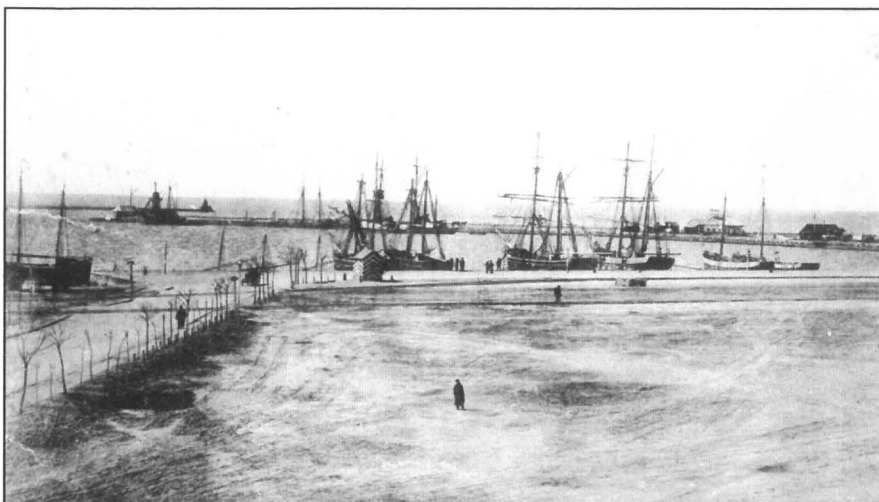


Bank building in Berdyansk, built late nineteenth century



Lutheran Cathedral in Berdyansk,  
nineteenth century

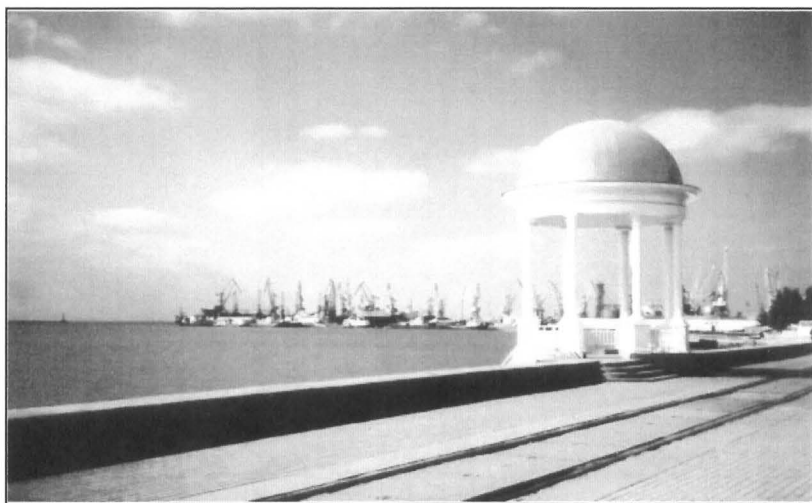




The port at Berdyansk



Main dock in Berdyansk



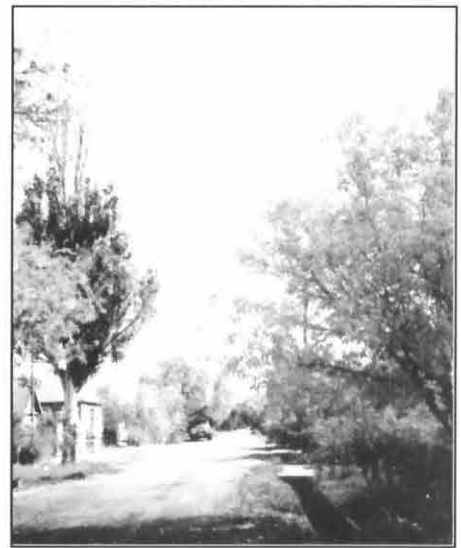
Berdyansk port in 2004

Port facilities

Berdyansk in 2004



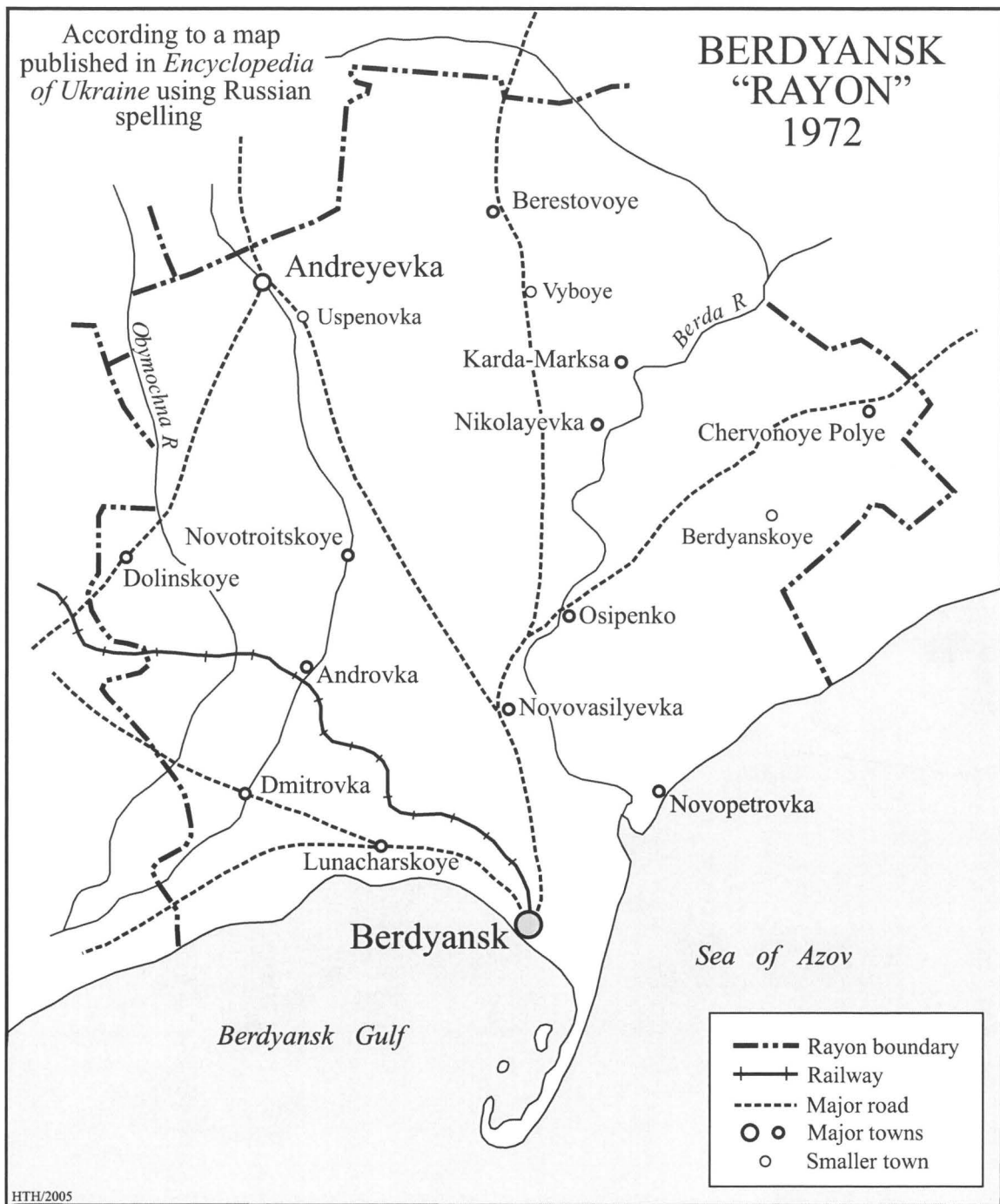
A former "German" house, now a tombstone makers business

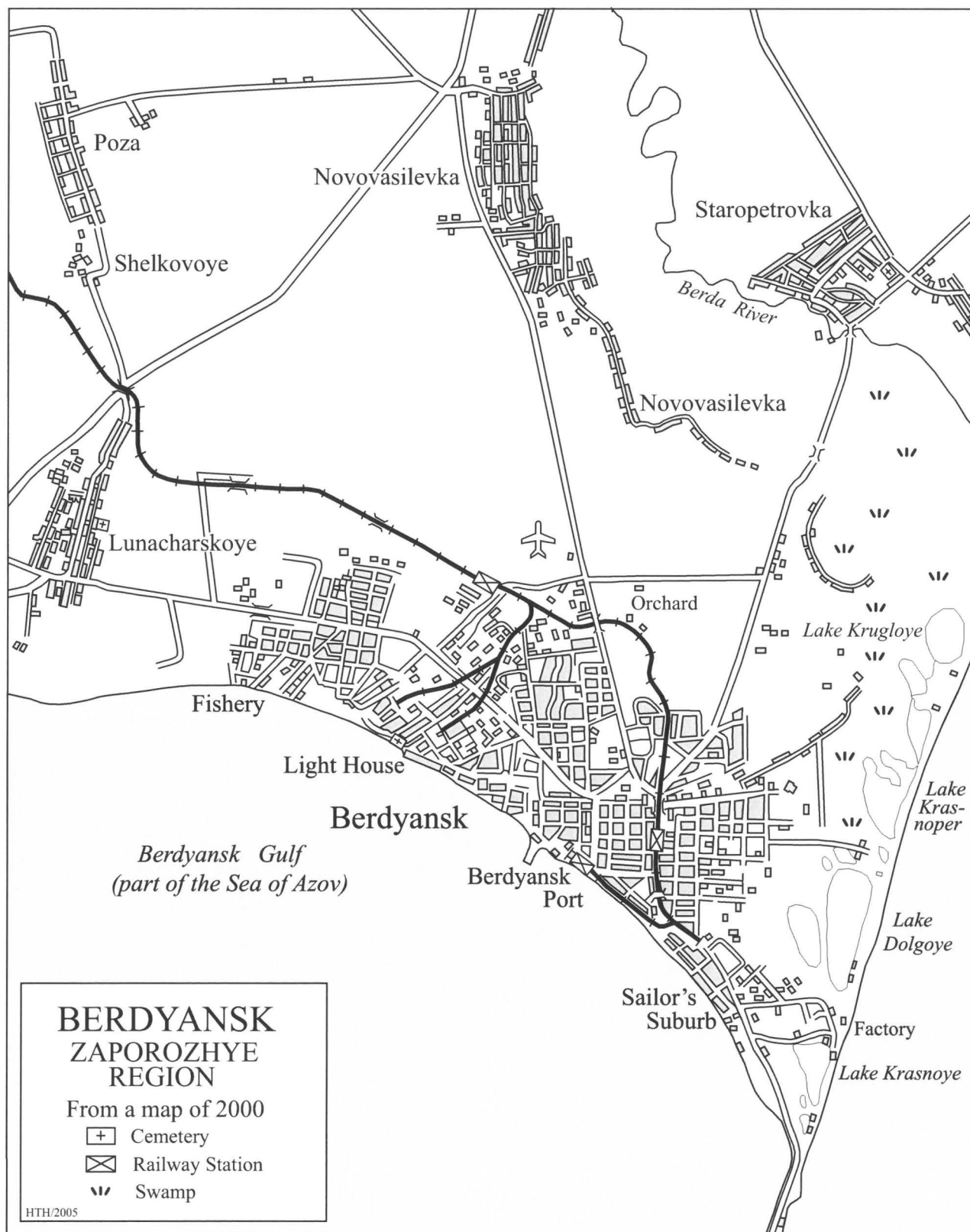


Street in the "German quarter"



*Gymnasium/Teachers College, built 1875*





**BERDYANSK INSTITUTIONS**  
(Utilized or participated in by Mennonites)

**Agricultural Society of Berdyansk**

Isbrand Friesen was chairman

**Bank in Berdyansk**

A P Ediger was a director

**Bank of the City of Berdyansk**

Isbrand Friesen a director for 18 years

**Berdyansk City Administration**

Heinrich Abram Ediger was city councillor for many years

Heinrich Abram Ediger was mayor of Berdyansk for a number of years

**College** (possibly *Realschule* for girls)

Katharina Dyck transferred from a college in Kharkov to Berdyansk, because her parents thought it was safer in Berdyansk

**Cooking courses** offered in the city

At least 8 Mennonite girls were in the course at one time

***Realschule***

Government school, besides the private Mennonite *Realschule* started by A A Neufeld

In 1910 half of the students in the upper class were Mennonites

## CRIMEAN WAR ADVENTURE

Two citizens tell the story

**Leonhard Abraham Sudermann**, later Elder, lived through the Crimean War as it was played out on the Sea of Azov in 1855. In 1882 he published a report of his personal experiences in the pages of the *Familienkalender* (Elkhart). As was his style, the narrative is interspersed with expounding on lengthy moral lessons to be learned, by the quoting of numerous Bible verses and hymns. One of his favourite songs needed to have all five stanzas in the text. The events according to Leonhard were roughly as follows:

The Friday before Pentecost, 25 May 1855, the Sudermanns were about to sit down to a midday meal when a neighbour friend rushed in to tell them, “Dear ones, do not be too shocked if I tell you an important but disconcerting bit of news; the enemy is near our city and could possibly land in a few hours.” That news certainly did not improve the appetites of those who were about to eat.

Trade and commerce had carried on as usual in the Sea of Azov despite the British and French Fleets being on the Black Sea. There was assurance that the passageway between the two bodies of water at the Strait of Kerch was blocked by mines. The flour required by the Russian forces could therefore be easily transported from the port cities where it was being milled, to the Crimea where it was needed, by small vessels. One day, however, it occurred to the commander of the British fleet that it would be worth a try to navigate the strait. The first ship made it, and was rapidly followed by others.

Three Russian steamers anchored nearby saw this happen. They headed full-steam ahead to the north to escape, and into the Berdyansk port. Ignoring the retaining wall they grounded themselves on the beach. It was from the crews of these ships that the disturbing news of the approach of the enemy had come. Typical for Leonhard Sudermann, he thought of a hymn to calm his nerves and those of his household.

The truth of the warning was confirmed; the next step was to make plans for the escape from danger. It was decided that the best immediate haven was Neuhoﬀnung, a German (Swabian Separatist) village about 18 verst (19.3 km) from the coast. The Sudermanns loaded the necessary clothes and linens onto a one horse wagon and headed north - together with many others. Once they had reached the main road women and children continued on the trail; the men turned back to complete arrangements in the city. People from Neuhoﬀnung even came to Berdyansk with wagons to help in the evacuation.

Towards evening Leonard and others back in the city were loading personal belongings onto wagons when there was a tremendous explosion, assumed to be a cannonball from an enemy ship. In a while there was a second, then a third, followed by a number of further explosions. Having loaded the wagons the group headed out and onto an elevation behind the city where they could survey the scene. No enemy ships were visible. The three grounded steamers were, however, blazing. The crews had set their ships on fire to prevent them from falling into enemy hands. When the fires reached the magazines the ammunition was ignited, resulting in tremendous explosions.

The next morning the smaller ships in port headed eastward in an attempt to escape the enemy. This effort later proved to be fruitless, since the Allied Fleet eventually controlled the whole

coastline. Saturday noon, a day after the first warning, enemy ships were sighted from Berdyansk. Before heading for port they first destroyed all the small ships in the region, setting them ablaze.

As Leonhard was looking out over the city, he noted that within 24 hours it had been abandoned. He apparently waited so long at his wonderful vantage point that by nightfall everyone had left. He managed to cajole a Russian, who had been his servant, into lending him a small skinny horse; he even got a fur coat to sit on, since there was no saddle. Leonhard reached Neuhoftung, and even was able to find his wife. The Sudermanns found that there was room in the houses, but also in the hearts of the people. The evening service conducted by the local pastor was a tremendous blessing.

The next morning, Sunday, was Pentecost; again the church service was a time of real blessing. Even some Russians and Italians from the city of Berdyansk were present. The pastor took the opportunity to castigate a few of his own members for using the misfortunes of others to reap undue profits.

Those who were able to visit Berdyansk after several weeks found it to be considerably changed. The enemy had destroyed some of the houses near the sea, by fire, but otherwise most buildings stood. A few sailors had come ashore on Pentecost Sunday and amused themselves by hunting the freely running chickens and pigs, both as sport, and to supplement their diet. The unpaved streets had tall weeds; disorganized yards showed the haste with which the inhabitants had left. It was a rare occurrence to meet any person on the streets.

The enemy ships could be seen periodically, but by and large they left the city in peace. The Russian government, however, stationed a number of Cossacks in the city. When a group of military personnel was spotted by ship telescope the British would send a cannonball into the area. It would have been possible to move back to some of the residential areas, but the government strictly forbade it. Leonhard's own garden and orchard had "become a wilderness, with weeds growing to their heart's content." They were almost the size of trees.

Occasionally, with special consent, a person might be allowed into the city to accomplish urgent business. Leonhard must have convinced someone that he was on essential business when he found himself in Berdyansk with his horse and wagon. It occurred to him that he should wash his horse in the sea, the way he usually did in peacetime, this despite a British warship lying at anchor in the harbour. He soon noticed a rowboat, with a number of military personnel on board, heading his way. He took the horse out of the water, and was applying the harness when a British officer approached him and spoke to him in English. All Leonhard could understand was the word "Governor." From this he concluded that the officer wished to speak to the mayor of the city. The officer sat down on the wagon, leaving no room for Leonhard, so the procession travelled with Leonhard leading the way on foot until they found the mayor. He was about to embark upon his midday meal with a number of business friends, when he was interrupted - by the Vice Admiral of the British Fleet. That was who the mystery passenger was.

As could readily be imagined, once Leonhard had delivered his passenger, he left for his own home, where he had an undisturbed midday meal. The Vice Admiral's business was to requisition additional cattle. When the Russian authorities were negligent in fulfilling the request they were forced to pay a heavy fine.

Since the war continued for some time the Sudermann's settled in the Molotschna Colony, where they again experienced brotherly love and fellowship. They finally left these quarters in the



spring of 1856 after peace had been declared, and returned to their own home in Berdyansk.

**Heinrich Abram Ediger**, born in Berdyansk after the Crimean War treaties had been signed, was subsequently a city councillor for many years, and the mayor for a number of years. In 1928, as part of his *Erinnerungen*, he wrote a brief account of Berdyansk involvement in the war.

One day five English warships appeared on the horizon. Two Russian frigates lay at anchor in the port. To defeat the enemy was impossible, escape not likely, so the crews set them aflame and detonated explosives on them.

Cossack forces in the nearby village of Petrovsk had also seen the enemy ships, so 100 men with two cannons were despatched to Berdyansk. They sent a few cannonballs in the direction of the enemy - the English ships retaliated with a vigorous barrage from their cannons. The Cossacks were forced to retire. Years later some of the cannonballs were still embedded in the facades of a number of houses.

The enemy landed, demanding to see the city administration. They offered to spare destruction of the city in exchange for 100 beef cattle. After lengthy negotiations the mayor, Vassiliy Anopoff, promised to deliver the demanded cattle in a few days. He kept his word and delivered the cattle, at the same time receiving the negotiated payment. The enemy ships sailed off and did not return.

The English ships had no sooner departed when the brave Cossacks returned and put the mayor into prison for collaborating with the enemy. Thanks to the pleading of the citizens of the city, and their assertion that Anopoff really had no choice in delivering the cattle to spare the city a bombardment, the mayor was released after a few days.

## LIST OF PEOPLE

(People who at one time lived in Berdyansk)  
(Each name will appear in **bold** print only once)

We have been able to identify 978 Mennonites who spent some time of their lives in Berdyansk. Obviously there were never that many in the city at any one time, with records of them residing in the city all the way from the 1830s to as late as the 1940s. There were 19 Mennonites registered as living in Berdyansk in 1942.

### **Abrams, Jacob E**

Born 11 November 1828 in Tiegerweide, Molotschna  
Parents Johann Peter Abrahams and Maria Ewert  
Brother of Katharina E Abrams  
Baptized 12 June 1850 in South Russia  
Died 1872 in Berdyansk

### **Abrams, Katharina E**

Born 9 December 1830 in Tiegerweide, Molotschna  
Parents Johann Peter Abrahams and Maria Ewert  
Sister of Jacob E Abrams  
Baptized 28 May 1851 in South Russia  
Possibly invited guest to the wedding of Heinrich Peter Bahnmann and Katharina Wiens on  
11 January 1877 (called Widow Abrams)  
Died in Berdyansk (date not known)

### **Albrecht, Abram Abram**

Formerly from Pologi  
By 1922 lived in Berdyansk, requested food draft via the *Mennonitische Rundschau* 7 June 1922  
Address: Strasse Gogolevskaya No 26, Berdyansk  
Looking for Peter Loewen

### **Albrecht, Peter**

Wife **Maria Dueck**

The Albrechts actually lived on the 1,000 dessiatine Ebenfeld Estate in the Pologi municipality, and owned a large mill in Pologi

Children:

**Peter** - born 1911 in Pologi, moved with the family to Halbstadt, Berdyansk, Hamberg, then to Canada in 1925, married Aganetha (Nettie), no children of their own, but adopted 3 girls, Peter died in Edmonton about 2002, Nettie is still alive (2005)

**Abram** - born 30 May 1912 in Pologi, moved with the family to Halbstadt, Berdyansk, Hamberg, then to Canada in 1925, married Aganeta Thiessen 4 February 1967  
Abram died 23 February 1993 in Winnipeg, Manitoba

**Heinrich** - born 25 September 1913 in Pologi, moved with the family to Halbstadt, Berdyansk, Hamberg, then to Canada in 1925, married Margaretha, one son Daniel born about 1959, who was killed in a truck accident in 1972, Margaretha

died about 2001, Heinrich is living in Winnipeg (2005)  
1917 the family moved to Halbstadt, Molotschna, then in 1920 to Berdyansk, then back to the  
Hamberg, Molotschna  
September 1925 they immigrated to Canada, at first staying on a farm in Starbuck, Manitoba,  
then in the spring of 1926 they moved to Winnipeg  
Father Peter died in 1952, Maria in 1965

**Bahnmann, Cornelius**

Born 25 September 1802

Wife **Susanna Neudorf**, born about 1795

Children:

Cornelius - born about 1830 (see separate listing Cornelius Cornelius Bahnmann)

**Jakob** - born about 1833

Moved from Kronsthal, Chortitza Farm No 4, to Berdyansk in 1830

Father Cornelius worked as a bricklayer

**Bahnmann, Cornelius Cornelius**

Born about 1830, either in Kronsthal, Chortitza or Berdyansk

Parents Cornelius Bahnmann and Susanna Neudorf

Married **Katharina Sudermann** about 1849

Children:

**Cornelius** - born about 1850 in Berdyansk

**Jakob** - born 27 July 1856

**Katharina** - born 23 April 1858

**Franz** - born 3 April 1859

**Heinrich** - born 28 June 1861

**Anna** - born 18 October 1863

**Aron** - born 26 February 1865

**Peter** - born 15 February 1867

**Johann** - born 22 September 1869

**Susanna** - born 31 July 1870

**Helena** - born 7 January 1876

Family migrated to Canada on the *S S Quebec*, landing in Quebec 23 June 1876

At least some of the family lived in Kleinstadt, Manitoba, where Anna died 4 August 1897

**Bahnmann, Jakob**

Born 15 September 1831, baptized 1851

Married **Margaretha Fast** 21 January 1854

She was born 17 September 1836, baptized 1853

Parents Peter Fast and Justina Hiebert

Moved to Berdyansk sometime before 1856

Children:

**Cornelius** - born 17 November 1854, married Elisabeth K Nickel 15 April 1874,

3 children, Elisabeth died 21 January 1879, married Anna Guenther 11 July 1880,  
10 more children

**Jakob** - born 28 October 1856 in Berdyansk, married Anna Unrau 20 January 1878,

migrated to Burwalde, Manitoba, 14 children, Anna died 24 May 1913, married Emma Liesch 7 March 1915, Jakob died 15 March 1922  
Jakob was baptized 30 May 1886, said to be the first Mennonite Brethren baptized in Canada

**Peter** - born 21 October 1860 in Berdyansk, married Maria Friesen, 9 children, died March 1925

**Margaretha** - born 17 January 1865, married Johann Sudermann 15 July 1884, 12 children, died 30 October 1905

**Justina** - born 21 May 1867 in Berdyansk, married Heinrich Unger 14 July 1885, 11 children, died 18 February 1905

**Katharina** - born 15 October 1869, married Benjamin Fehr 7 June 1888, 10 children

**Abram** - born 22 October 1871, died 15 April 1879

**Anna** - born 10 January 1874, died 13 April 1879

Presumably there was an epidemic of some kind of childhood disease

Susanna - born 8 December 1876, died 8 December 1876

Ship list has a Jakob Bahnmann family arriving in Ontario or Manitoba 22 July 1875

### **Bahnmann, Peter Jakob**

Born 1 December 1814 in Kronsweide, Chortitza Colony

Parents Jakob Bahnmann and Helena Wiens who migrated to Chortitza about 1789

Married **Maria Kaetler**, probably about 1838, she was born 16 April 1819 in Prussia

Lived in Kronsweide, Chortitza Colony, where they had Farm No 3, by 1837 to Berdyansk

Peter did various types of work; initially he may have been a surveyor in Berdyansk

He was the Berdyansk representative on the Molotschna Regional Council in 1851

Children:

**Helena** - born about 1837 in Berdyansk, married **Abram Nickel**, migrated to the USA in 1875, settling in Mountain Lake, Minnesota

**Peter** - born about 1839 in Berdyansk, married Maria Martens, daughter of Jakob Wilhelm Martens (an estate owner), they lived on an estate in the Brodsky area, became extremely wealthy, also owned estates at Reinfeld and Marianovka, had 2 daughters born on the estate, Maria and Katharina, wife Maria died 1889, Peter died December 1907

**Jakob** - born about 1846 in Berdyansk, married **Maria Guenther** 19 February 1870 in the Berdyansk Mennonite Church, Maria was born about 1845

She was daughter of Dietrich Guenther and Maria Janzen

Had one daughter **Maria**, born 31 August 1888 in Berdyansk

Daughter Maria married **Isbrand Hermann Friesen**

Jakob died December 1893, wife Maria died 1920 in Ohrloff

Heinrich - born 29 October 1852 in Berdyansk

Married Katharina Wiens of Berdyansk on 11 January 1877

(see Regier, Katharina Nikolai (nee Wiens) for details of family history)

Died 19 June 1906 in Waldheim, Saskatchewan

**Anna** - born about 1855 in Berdyansk, married **David Bartel** 14 June 1873

Were invited guests to the wedding of Heinrich Peter Bahnmann and Katharina Wiens on 11 January 1877

Had at least 1 daughter **Helena**, many descendants, some of whom died of starvation in Russia

Anna died December 1889

**Maria** - born 17 May 1860 in Berdyansk, married Johann Giesbrecht, 10 children, many descendants, some of whom died of starvation in Russia

Maria died after 1927

Invited guests to the wedding of Heinrich Peter Bahnmann and Katharina Wiens on 11 January 1877

Peter Jakob Bahnmann died 28 December 1885 in Berdyansk

Wife Maria died 1 March 1910 in Berdyansk

### **Bartel, Heinrich**

Born 31 March 1833 in Brenkenhofswalde, Brandenburg, Prussia

Baptized 5 September 1860

Married **Helena Regier** 12 August 1861 in Landskrone, Molotschna

Her parents were Peter Regier and Helena Kroecker

Children:

Peter - born 23 May 1863 in South Russia, died 23 May 1863 in South Russia

Heinrich - born 15 July 1864 in South Russia, died 1864 in South Russia

David - born 1 September 1865 in South Russia, died 1865 in South Russia

**Peter** - born 25 May 1867 in Rostov, Don River region, immigrated to USA, married Anna Vogt 13 June 1890, 12 children, died 26 March 1940 in Corn, Oklahoma

**Heinrich** - born 29 December 1868 in Rostov, Don River region, immigrated to USA, married Sarah Regier, lived in Fairview Oklahoma, 6 children, died 27 April 1957 in Fresno, California

**Helena** - born 11 November 1871 in Rostov, Don River region, immigrated to USA, married Cornelius C Cornelsen 27 November 1890 in Liberty, Kansas, 3 children, died 21 September 1910 in Fairview, Oklahoma

Family must have moved to and lived in Berdyansk for a brief period

**Maria** - born 15 June 1873 in Berdyansk, died 1873 in Berdyansk

The family seems to have moved back to Rostov, Don River region

Wilhelm - born 26 October 1875 in Rostov, Don River region, immigrated to USA, married Amelia Karber 13 October 1897 in Fairview, Oklahoma, 11 children, died 15 June 1969 in Reedley, California

The family immigrated to the USA, boarding the *S S Wieland*, travelling Hamburg, Le Havre, landing in New York 15 June 1880, settling in Kansas, where 3 more children were born

Jakob - born 28 July 1880 in Marion, Kansas

David - born 20 June 1884 in Hillsboro, Kansas

Abraham - born 14 September 1888 in Hillsboro Kansas

Father Heinrich died 5 December 1907 in Fairview, Oklahoma

Mother Helena died 16 March 1932 in Enid, Oklahoma

**Bartel, Wilhelm**

In the 1850s and 1860s a colporteur and evangelist based in Berdyansk

Active in the circle of Mennonites who supported Eduard Wuest in the 1850s

Johann Claassen made 2 trips to St Petersburg and Reval to deal with the legal problems associated with the *Bruderschule*. The young Wilhelm Bartel was one of 4 men that accompanied him in 1854

He associated with Kappes, a radical charismatic, was quite active in the *Froehliche Richtung*  
Wilhelm was one of 33 men who signed a document written by the early Mennonite Brethren to the Ohrloff Mennonite Church on 19 March 1860, stating that they would be open to reconciliation.

Another letter written to clarify the position of the breakaway church, signed by 5 brothers, including Heinrich Huebert and Wilhelm Bartel, was sent from Berdyansk 27 December 1860

Bartel continued as a businessman in Berdyansk until he moved in 1864

**Berg, Jakob**

Born about 1809

Wife **Susanna** - born about 1805

Children:

**Susanna** - born about 1833

**Heinrich** - born about 1835

**Katharina** - born about 1837

**Franz** - born about 1838

**Peter** - born about 1840

**Wilhelm** - born about 1842

**Isaak** - born about 1845

Moved from Marienthal, Molotschna, where he owned Farm No 2, to Berdyansk by 1852

Owned a windmill in Berdyansk by 1852, and was a cabinet maker

**Bergen, Jakob**

Born about 1833

Wife **Helena Rempel**

Born about 1840

Children: presumably all born in Berdyansk

**Aganetha** - born about 1858

**Elisabeth** - born about 1859

**Helena** - born about 1860 in Berdyansk

Married Heinrich Peter Janzen 20 October 1884, 9 children

Died 29 September 1942 in Enid, Oklahoma

**Gerhard** - born about 1861

**Katharina** - born about 1864

**Anna** - born about 1867

**Maria** - born about 1870

**Sarah** - born about 1873

Whole family immigrated to USA in 1874

Departed Hamburg and Le Havre aboard the *S S Cimbria*, arrived in New York  
27 August 1874

Likely settled in Enid, Oklahoma

**Brauer, Mr**

Wife **Mrs Brauer**

Daughter **Maria** was born 1 July 1877 in Berdyansk

She was baptized 1896

Married Jacob Harder 16 May 1899 in Ohrloff, Molotschna

He was born 7 December 1873 in Rosenort, Molotschna

Children:

Jacob - born 20 April 1905 in Dolainsk, Neu Samara Colony, immigrated to  
Canada, married Maria Penner 26 April 1931 in Allingham, Alberta,  
at least 1 son born in Alberta

**Brauer, Nikolai Erdmann**

Born 15 June 1893 in Franzthal, Molotschna

Married **Helena Dueck** 23 March 1919 in Franzthal

She was born 15 February 1902 in Franzthal

First lived in Franzthal, where the first 2 children were born, then to Berdyansk by 1940

Children:

**Elise** - born 15 September 1921 in Franzthal, married Peter Thielmann 24 May 1942 in  
Franzthal, 3 children, Peter escaped to Germany during World War II, then to  
Canada, Elise also escaped, the last of the children being born in Saskatchewan

**Nikolai** - born 15 January 1929 in Franzthal, married Irmgard Wiebe

**Helena** (Lena) - born 4 February 1940 in Berdyansk, married Edward (Ed) Dyck in 1861

**Braun, Heinrich**

Born about 1830

Lived in Bergthal Colony, likely with his father

Came to Berdyansk certainly by 29 December 1852

Worked as a miller

**Buhler, Bernhard Abraham**

Born 20 February 1834 in Prangenu, Molotschna

Parents Abraham Abraham Buller and his second wife (name not known) lived on Farm No 14  
in Prangenu

Baptized 1854 in Prangenu

Married **Anna Penner**, who was born 25 July 1838

Elected as minister of the Berdyansk Mennonite Church 27 July 1864

Children:

**Abraham** - born 5 March 1858, immigrated to USA with parents in 1877, died  
21 January 1917 in Buhler, Kansas

**Bernhard** - born 28 December 1867, baptized 5 October 1895, married Margarethe Fast,  
died July 1925

**Maria** - born 8 February 1870 in Berdyansk, immigrated to USA with parents in 1877,  
married Johann J Wall 19 June 1892, Johann was co-founder of Wall-Rogalsky



Milling Company of McPherson, Kansas, 5 children, Johann died  
25 September 1916, Maria died February 1958

**Elisabeth** - born 6 January 1873, immigrated to USA with parents in 1877, married  
Peter W Enns, Peter died 10 September 1957 in Newton, Kansas, Elisabeth  
died 11 October 1965

**Johann** - born 5 May 1876, immigrated to USA with parents in 1877, died 25 April 1933

David - born 12 April 1880, died 25 January 1930

Margaret - born 8 June 1881, married Abram Dyck, 2 children, died 27 September 1954

Anna - born 24 July 1883, married Jacob Cornelius Regier 27 April 1906 in Buhler,  
Kansas, 4 children, died 28 January 1941 in River Junction, Florida

Migrated to the USA, departing from Antwerp on board *S S Vaderland*, arriving in  
Philadelphia 29 June 1877

Settled in Buhler, Kansas

### **Buhler, Jakob Abraham**

Born 1824 in the Chortitza Colony

Parents Abraham Abraham Buller and his second wife (name not known) lived on Farm No 14  
in Prangenau

Married **Justina Klassen**

Her parents were Abraham Peter Klassen and Maria Froese

Moved from Grossweide to Berdyansk by 1847

Children:

**Maria** - born 8 July 1847 in Berdyansk, married Abraham Penner 4 June 1868 in  
Schoenfeld, Bergthal Colony  
(see separate entry Abraham Penner)

**Justina** - born about 1849

Owned a windmill in Berdyansk by 1850

Elected as minister in the 1850s

Active with Eduard Wuest, described as his "Jonathan"

Owned his own house

Rented a grain warehouse from Cornelius Janzen in September of 1852

Died suddenly of typhoid fever 1855 while away from Berdyansk

### **Claassen, Bernhard**

Born 7 November 1817 in Heubuden, West Prussia

Parents Peter Claassen and Margarete Wiebe

Bernhard was the tenth of 12 children

Married **Anna Reimer**, who was born about 1827

Migrated from Prussia to the Molotschna between 1835 and 1850

Listed in Rudnerweide No 37 with the family of Abraham Wiebe

By 1852 he moved from Rudnerweide to Berdyansk

In Berdyansk worked at manufacturing bricks

Children:

**Margareta** - born 12 August 1849

**Jakob** - born 20 January 1851 in Rudnerweide

Bernhard died 26 September 1853, presumably in Berdyansk

**Claassen, Cornelius**

Born about 1818

Father Abraham Claassen lived in Grossweide, Molotschna Farm No 15

Wife **Anna** - born about 1823

Children:

**Abraham** - born about 1842

**Helena** - born about 1844

**Johann** - born about 1847

Moved from Grossweide to Berdyansk by 1850

Owned a flour mill in Berdyansk by 1850

**DeFehr, Johann**

Born 1834 in Tiegerweide, Molotschna

Married **Sarah Steingart** 13 March 1862

Children:

**Johann** - born 9 December 1862, married Anna (family name not known), 4 children

Franz - born 5 March 1863, died 30 November 1864

**Franz** - born 11 November 1865 in Tiegerweide, married Elisabeth Dick 12 June 1887, 5 children, Elisabeth died, married Agatha Blatz, 13 more children, Agatha died, married Evangeline, Franz died 24 March 1949 in Portland, Oregon

**Sarah** - born 21 February 1867 in Berdyansk, married Franz C Dick 6 September 1885 in Henderson, Nebraska, 10 children, Franz died 5 August 1935, Sarah died 1 March 1949, both in Henderson, Nebraska

The DeFehr family moved from Tiegerweide to Berdyansk between 1865 and 1867

Father Johann died 3 May 1867, likely in Berdyansk

Mother Sarah married Peter Dahlke, likely a widower with at least 3, possibly 5 children

Not known where this blended family lived

Migrated to the USA, they were aboard the *S S Strassburg*, departing from Bremen, arriving in New York 2 July 1878

They settled in Henderson, Nebraska

Mother Sarah died 7 December 1879 in Henderson, Nebraska

**Derksen, Jakob**

Wife **Margareta Dick**

Son **Nikolai** - born about 1895

Escaped to Constantinople by 19 January 1921

The brother of Jakob, Peter Derksen, lived in Post Ridge, Montana

**Dick, Jakob**

Wife **Mrs Dick**

In 1882 a development company was formed in Berdyansk to purchase land in other areas of the country, presumably because of an expanding Mennonite population in that city

A number of families used this means to purchase land in Ogus-Tobe in the Crimea.

The Jakob Dicks were among these, probably moving in 1882 or shortly thereafter, moving their entire property, including a mill

**Dick, Peter Franz**

Teacher Dick of Berdyansk was listed as a correspondent for *Friedensstimme* December, 1912  
Graduate of the Ohrloff *Zentralschule* and the Halbstadt Pedagogical Institute  
Short time at the Institute at Muristalden near Berne  
Teacher at the *Musterschule* in Neuhalbstadt 1890-1903  
After 1903 taught at the Mennonite school in Berdyansk  
Later taught at elementary school in Johannesheim of the Schoenfeld Volost

**Dirks, Anna**

Born about 1823, probably in Alexanderwohl, Molotschna  
Parents Benjamin Georg Unrau and Ancke Freyen  
Married Johann W Dirks; she died in Berdyansk

**Dirks, David**

Invited guest to the wedding of Heinrich Peter Bahnmann and Katharina Wiens on  
11 January 1877

**Dirks, Maria**

Invited guest to the wedding of Heinrich Peter Bahnmann and Katharina Wiens on  
11 January 1877

**Doerksen, Elisabeth**

Born about 1894  
Migrated from Berdyansk to Rosthern, Saskatchewan in 1925

**Doerksen, H**

Signed the letter of thanks for food packages written by Elder Leonhard Sudermann late 1922

**Doerksen, Jakob**

Born about 1827  
Married **Elisabeth Epp** in Blumenort, Molotschna  
Children:

Agnes - born 13 January 1862 in Berdyansk, married Peter Abraham Ediger  
(see Peter Abraham Ediger for further details)

**Margaretha** - born 15 February 1877 in Berdyansk, baptized 12 June 1894 in Berdyansk,  
married Wilhelm Voth 26 November 1919 in Kaban, Crimea, he was a  
minister of the Busau church

Invited guests to the wedding of Heinrich Peter Bahnmann and Katharina Wiens on  
11 January 1877

Jakob died 1910, Ebenfeld, Crimea

**Doerksen, Jakob**

Owned a business selling equipment for the kitchen and the laundry room  
Advertising equipment in 1905-15 in *Christlicher Familienkalendar*

**Doerksen, Johann Jakob**

In 1922 lived in Berdyansk; requested food packages via the *Mennonitische Rundschau*,  
31 May 1922

Address: Sadovaya Street, No 49

Looking for Gerhard and Dietrich Neufeld of Inman, Kansas

Wrote a report 17 June 1922 describing the famine conditions in Berdyansk

Signed the letter of thanks for food packages written by Elder Leonhard Sudermann in late 1922

**Doerksen, Peter**

Born 1862

Married **Aganetha Heinrich Epp** 20 May 1887 in Blumenfeld, Schoenfeld Colony

She was born 26 October 1864 in Blumenfeld

Her parents were Heinrich Epp and Aganetha Janzen

They first lived in Blumenfeld, Schoenfeld Colony, then moved to Berdyansk by 1891

Children:

**Aganetha** - born 20 March 1888 , married Abram Epp 30 May 1914, had 3 children, Abram Epp died 31 October 1918 (murdered) Aganetha married Johannes Heinrich Thiessen, immigrated to Canada, had 1 child, Aganetha died 12 July 1966 in Leamington, Ontario

**Sara** - born 3 August 1891 in Berdyansk, married Peter Neufeld 17 June 1918, lived in Maryevka where the first children were born, immigrated to Boissevain, Manitoba, where the last 3 children were born

Not sure if the next 3 were born in Berdyansk

Justina - born 18 March 1894

Katharina - born 26 January 1896

Maria - born before 1900

Wife Aganetha died 30 January 1900

Peter married Elisabeth Albrecht 17 June 1900, she died 23 November 1904

Peter married Katharina Epp

Moved to Maryevka by 1906, where the next child Agatha was born

Had another 4 children, Peter, Anna, Heinrich and Jacob

Father Peter died 6 April 1918, Pohonov Estate, Barvenkovo region

**Dueck, Cornelius**

(The history of this family is confusing at best; have tried to be as accurate as possible)

Born 29 July 1837

Married **Katharina Koop** 13 February 1868

Probably first lived in Elbing region, West Prussia, then briefly in Berdyansk, then back to Elbing region, then immigrated to USA, possibly in 1891

Children:

**Jacob** - born 23 November 1868, married Anna Vogt, 4 children, died 24 November 1901

**Maria** - born 7 May 1871 in Berdyansk, married Johann W Baergen, immigrated to Kansas, 7 children

Cornelius - born 8 March 1875, immigrated to the USA, married Anna Regier, 7 children, Anna died, married Maria Regier, another 4 children, Cornelius died 11 March 1916

Aganetha - born 12 August 1876, married Jacob J Vogt, 9 children, died 15 December 1964

Katharina - born 15 March 1880, married Peter F Boese, 7 children, died

10 January 1958 in Lamar, Colorado

Not sure where Cornelius, Aganetha and Katharina were born

Bernhard - born 20 July 1881 in Elbing region, West Prussia

Helena - born 10 October 1883 in Elbing region, West Prussia

**Dueck, David Johann**

Formerly from Mariawohl, Molotschna

In 1922 lived in Berdyansk; requested food packages via the *Mennonitische Rundschau*,  
31 May 1922

Address: Vostotschnyy Prospect, No 14

Looking for Peter Abram Dueck of Los Angeles, California and Jakob Schroeder, address not known

**Dueck, Franz Isaac** (sometimes spelled Dyck)

Born 16 September 1874 in Berdyansk

Married **Anna Neufeld** 29 December 1905

She was born 19 December 1882 in Rosenhof, Russia

Parents Johann Johann Neufeld and Katharina Wiens

Children:

**Leopold** - born 1908, married Veronika Sudermann, 2 children

**Victor** - born 21 May 1911 in Berdyansk, married Hedwig Unrau, 2 children

**Arnold** - born 1914

Franz died 6 April 1920 in Berdyansk

**Dueck, Gerhard**

Grain merchant in Berdyansk, possibly in partnership with Isaak Dueck

**Dueck, Isaak**

(within one document it is spelled Dueck or Dyck)

Born 3 February 1834 in Pordenau, Molotschna

Married **Helena Dueck** 15 March 1856 in Berdyansk

She was born 3 September 1836

Parents Gerhard Franz Dueck and Anna Dyck

Children:

**Helena** - born 5 November 1861 in Berdyansk, married Johann Fast 29 December 1884  
in Berdyansk, moved to the Kuban

Children:

Alexander - born 22 September 1890 in Alexanderfeld, Kuban

Franz - born 16 September 1874 in Berdyansk

(see separate listing for Franz Isaac Dueck)

Isaak was a prosperous grain merchant in Berdyansk

Invited guests to the wedding of Heinrich Peter Bahnmann and Katharina Wiens on  
11 January 1877

Mother Helena died 29 February 1908 in Berdyansk, Isaac died 12 April 1920

**Dueck, Jakob**

Invited guest to the wedding of Heinrich Peter Bahnmann and Katharina Wiens on  
11 January 1877

**Dueck, Jacob Johann**

Born 18 February 1884 in Muntau, Molotschna

Parents Johann Dueck and Justina Giesbrecht

Married **Maria Willms** 16 January 1912 in Berdyansk

She was born in Berdyansk 6 September 1886

They probably lived in Neu Schoensee, Sagradovka

Children:

Walter - born 27 March 1914

Victor - born 18 January 1918 in Neu Schoensee, Sagradovka

Jacob - born 8 June 1922

Helmut - born 23 April 1924

Immigrated to Ontario, Canada in the 1920s

Father Jacob died 1 September 1858 in Virgil, Ontario

Maria died 25 December 1967 in Vineland, Ontario, complications of burns after a stove exploded

**Dueck, Johann**

Invited guest to the wedding of Heinrich Peter Bahnmann and Katharina Wiens on  
11 January 1877

**Dueck, Mr**

Wife **Mrs Dueck**

Son **Isaac** born in Berdyansk

Married,

Isaac and his **wife** lived in Berdyansk

**Daughter** born in Berdyansk, she married Peter Wiebe, who was born in 1849,  
had some children,  
he died 1926 falling backwards off a wagon, probably breaking his neck

**Duerksen, Jakob**

From Berdyansk,

In 1922 in the Muntau hospital, having had an operation on 6 ribs

Hopes for recovery,

Remarks that he has not yet received food packages or a letter from his son in Shafter,  
California

Duerksen's children were doing very well; they had received many packages

**Duerksen, Jakob**

Refugee landed in Canada 2 February 1926, going to Laird, Saskatchewan

**Dyck, Anna**

Widow

In 1922 lived in Berdyansk; requested food packages via the *Mennonitische Rundschau*,  
31 May 1922

Address: Voronzovskaya Street, No 21

Looking for any friends

Signed the letter of thanks for food packages written by Elder Leonhard Sudermann in late  
1922

**Dyck, Franz****Wife Mrs Dyck**

Franz was son of Isaak Dyck

Franz Dyck was a medical doctor, who opened up the *Deutsches Krankenhaus* in Berdyansk

Official opening was held 15 February 1913

Advertised in *Der Botschafter* 4 January 1914

Died in 1920

**Dyck, Isaak**

Father of Dr Franz Dyck

Died 1920

**Dyck, Katharina**

Signed the letter of thanks for food packages written by Elder Leonhard Sudermann late 1922

**Dyck, M**

Signed the letter of thanks for food packages written by Elder Leonhard Sudermann late 1922

**Ediger, A P**

One of the builders/owners of the Tokmak Railway

Was a director of a bank in Berdyansk

**Ediger, Abram Salomon****Wife Mrs Ediger**

His father was Salomon Peter Ediger

His son Heinrich Abram Ediger born 6 November 1858

Abram taught school at Rosenhof Estate near Melitopol 1861-1867

Then moved to Berdyansk to start a business

Invited guests to the wedding of Heinrich Peter Bahnmann and Katharina Wiens on

11 January 1877

**Ediger, Agnes Peter**

Born 10 April 1884, parents Peter Abraham Ediger and Agnes Doerksen

Migrated from Berdyansk to Rosthern, Saskatchewan in 1925

**Ediger, Alexander Heinrich**

(see separate biography)

Born 1893 in Berdyansk

Parents Heinrich Abram Ediger and Emilie Friesen

He was likely the youngest of 3 sons

Graduated from the local classical *Gymnasium*

Studied history and philology for 4 years at the University at St Petersburg

Married **Katharina (Katie) Dyck** in 1918 in Berdyansk

She was born 24 July 1896 in the Crimea

Her parents were Jacob Dyck and Sara Reimer, estate owners

After Communist takeover in the region the newly married couple escaped to the Crimea

on an ice-breaker; in the Crimea it was somewhat more peaceful

Teaching in *Gymnasium* in a suburb of Simferopol

Children:

**Victoria Dagmar** (daughter) - born 1922; she was known as Dagmar



Harry - born 1926  
1922 chosen as a minister by his home congregation of Berdyansk  
1923 invited to be a teacher and preacher in Liebenau, Molotschna  
As minister he soon had to give up teaching  
Was accomplished musician, composer, conductor and pianist  
1925 ordained elder of the Schoensee congregation, by David H Epp  
Earnest Christian, remarkable ability, very friendly  
1925 elected chairman of the KfK (*Kommission fuer Kirchliche Angelegenheiten*)  
As chairman he often had to represent Mennonite churches in their dealings with the  
Communist government, frequently travelling to Kharkov and Moscow  
1925 to 1928 editor of *Unser Blatt*, the only Mennonite publication under Communist rule  
1933 arrested and sent to prison camp in Murmansk  
Released after 2½ years, then arrested again  
With his wife sent to eastern Siberia  
Separated from wife in 1938, and never seen again  
1940 wife released, she eventually found their children in Leningrad  
Wife came to Canada in 1949, settling in Kitchener, Ontario  
She died 6 September 1998 at the age of 102  
Both children survived

**Ediger, Anna**

Teacher in Berdyansk in April 1923  
She wrote a letter of thanks to the American Mennonites who had contributed food and  
clothing through the MCC  
Letter was published in the book by D M Hofer

**Ediger, Heinrich Abram**

(see separate biography)  
Born 6 November 1858 in Gnadenfeld, Molotschna  
Son of Abram Ediger, who was the son of Salomon Peter Ediger  
Abram Ediger taught school at Rosenhof 1861- 1867, then moved to Berdyansk to  
start a business  
Heinrich graduated from the Gnadenfeld *Zentralschule*, one of his teachers being David Goerz  
He himself was a teacher for some time

Married **Emilie Friesen**

Children:

**Theodor** - historian

**Harry** - lawyer

Alexander - born 1893, teacher, minister and musician

(see separate listing and biography of Alexander Heinrich Ediger)

Established a print shop and bookstore in Berdyansk

Together with David Epp he was one of the editors of *Der Botschafter*

On city council for many years, mayor of Berdyansk for several years

Responsible for establishing a Mennonite school in the Makorty suburb

Danish Consul for several years, until at least 1918

Was a bank director

One of the investors in the Tokmak Railway

Elected to the executive of the shareholders at a meeting in Berdyansk 21 June 1911

Contributed 3 rubles to the *Bethania Heilsanstalt* in October 1911, and 25 rubles to establish a bursary in honour of Minister Abraham Goerz in 1913

When the Red Army was bombarding Berdyansk during the Civil War, Heinrich, his family and other foreigners escaped to the Crimea on an ice-breaker. He departed for Germany soon after. He left his wife in the Crimea saying that she could not have tolerated the cold temperature during the trip

Reached Germany by 16 February 1921; address at the time Hofpiz Mohrenstrasse, Berlin

Wrote a book: *Erinnerungen aus meinem Leben* (1927)

Also wrote article: *Meine Schulzeit bei Lehrer Heinrich Franz*, published in *Der Bote*, 1930

Died in Karlsruhe, Germany 23 June 1943

### **Ediger, Peter**

Invited guest to the wedding of Heinrich Peter Bahnmann and Katharina Wiens on 11 January 1877

### **Ediger, Peter Abraham**

Born 21 February 1860 in Gnadenfeld, Molotschna

Parents Abraham Abraham Ediger and Sara Helena Hausknecht

Married **Agnes Doerksen** 12 June 1883 in Berdyansk

Her parents were Jakob Doerksen and Elisabeth Epp

Children: (many born in Berdyansk)

Agnes - born 10 April 1884 (see separate listing)

**Peter** - born 17 August 1885

**Nikolai** - born 25 March 1887

**Elisabeth (Lisa)** - born 1 March 1889

**Sara** - born 25 October 1890

**Maria** - born 18 December 1892

**Abraham** - born 27 December 1894

Anna - born 8 August 1896 in Halbstadt, Molotschna

Margaretha - born 31 October 1898

Agathe - born 18 August 1900

Emilie - born 24 September 1902

Helena - born 21 March 1904

Sometime before 1896 the family must have moved to Halbstadt

Sometime before his death father Peter moved back to Berdyansk

Father Peter Ediger died 1940 in Berdyansk

### **Ediger, Peter Abram**

Went to Ohrloff *Zentralschule*, then Halbstadt *Zentralschule* 1883-86

After that *Gymnasium* in Berdyansk

One of the investors in the Tokmak Railway

Elected to the executive of the shareholders at a meeting in Berdyansk 21 June 1911

In 1922 lived in Berdyansk, requested food packages via the *Mennonitische Rundschau*,

31 May 1922

Address: Voronzovskaya Street, No 87

Looking for Hermann E Sudermann of Newton, Kansas and A B Buhler of Buhler, Kansas

**Ediger, Th** (possibly Theodor)

Was the agent through whom a number of people contributed to the *Bethania Heilanstalt*,  
October 1911, totaling 23 rubles

**Eitzen, Daniel Daniel**

Born about 1814

Married **Helena Fast**, born about 1817, daughter of Johann Fast

Children:

**Johann** - born 21 August 1838 in Berdyansk

Married Helena Eitzen, born 5 May 1840 in Orechov

Her parents Kornelius Daniel Eitzen and Anna Peter Niessen

Johann was a partner in a flour mill in Orechov

Probably lived most of the time in Schoenwiese, 13 children

Helena died 16 May 1914, Johann died 22 October 1915

**Anna** - born 27 August 1840 in Berdyansk

Married Julius Siemens 16 June 1859

He was born 15 June 1836, parents Julius Peter Siemens and Katharina  
Anna Entz

Lived in Schoenwiese, 10 children

Julius died 13 December 1917 in Schoenwiese, Anna died 23 January 1920

**Daniel** - born about 1843, married Helena Neufeld, lived in Schoenwiese, 2 children,

**David** - born about 1845

**Helena** - born about 1850

**Eitzen, David Jakob**

Born about 1857

Parents Jakob Eitzen and Agatha Fast

Married **Helena Friesen** about 1880, she was born about 1860

Children:

**Bertha**

**Agatha** - born 14 November 1889, married Jakob Sawatzky, died 31 October 1966 in  
Merced, California

**Maria** - born 5 May 1891 in Berdyansk, baptized 7 June 1908 in Hoffnungsau, Kansas,  
married Peter H Janzen 5 May 1909, died 16 January 1963 in Newton, Kansas

Sometime after 1891 and before 1908 the family migrated from Berdyansk to Kansas

**Eitzen, Jakob**

Born 1823

Wife **Agatha Fast**

Born 18 January 1824 in Rudnerweide, Molotschna

Parents Johann Isaak Fast and Anna Ellert

Moved from Schoenwiese, Chortitza Colony, to Berdyansk in 1846

Jakob was involved in some type of agricultural work

Children:

**Johann**

**Peter**

**Helena** - born 15 March 1853 in Berdyansk

Baptized Pentecost 1872, married Heinrich H Quiring 12 February 1874,  
he was born 1850, 11 children

**Jakob** - born about 1855

David - born about 1857 (see separate listing David Jakob Eitzen)

**Gerhard**

**Agathe** - born 18 August 1869, baptized 29 May 1889

**Kornelius**

**Bertha**

**Enns, Abram**

Invited guest to the wedding of Heinrich Peter Bahnmann and Katharina Wiens on  
11 January 1877

**Enns, Elisabeth (Lisa)**

Born 1 February 1903 in Berdyansk

An orphan of unknown parentage, raised by an Enns family

Had a brother **George (Gerhard?)** and **2 sisters**

Married Heinrich Isbrand Rempel

Immigrated to Saskatchewan, Heinrich died 15 March 1967 in Saskatoon, Saskatchewan,  
Elisabeth died June 1974 in St Catharines, Ontario

**Enns, Isaak**

Owned an oil mill in Berdyansk by 1852

**Enns, Jakob**

Born about 1778

Married **Margaretha**, a widow, whose first husband was Peter Hiebert

Children:

**Jakob** - born 1803

Married **Margaretha Wiebe** who was born 1805

Children:

Jakob - born 21 December 1843 in Berdyansk (see separate listing)

Father Jakob's wife Margaretha died 16 May 1868

Jakob married again, **Widow Penner**

Jakob's third wife was his maid, **Katharina (Katie)**

Jakob died 1908

**Abraham** - born 1805

Married Elisabeth Toews who was born about 1805

Had 5 children, Abraham, Anna, Elisabeth, Margaretha, Katharina

Not known where they lived

Both parents Jakob and Margaretha Enns died and were buried in Berdyansk

**Enns, Jakob**

Born 21 December 1843 in Berdyansk

Married **Maria Sommerfeld** 9 February 1865, she was born 29 January 1841 in Tokmak  
Her parents were Heinrich Heinrich Sommerfeld and Margaretha Esau

Children:

**Margaretha** - born 28 November 1865, likely in Berdyansk, died 1 March 1867

**Maria** - born 4 June 1867, likely in Berdyansk, died 1 August 1868

**Jakob** - born 31 January 1869 in Berdyansk, married Elisabeth Schroeder  
21 November 1891, 8 children, died 8 January 1959 in Newton, Kansas

**Maria** - born 10 March 1871 in Berdyansk, married Johann Schroeder 12 October 1890,  
2 children, husband died 27 August 1916, married Jacob J Unruh 23 January 1923

**Margaretha** - born 10 December 1872 in Berdyansk, married Johann J Voth  
12 October 1890 (double wedding with Maria?), 10 children,  
Margaretha died 25 August 1947  
Johann died 5 May 1954 in Kansas

Heinrich - born 12 October 1874 in the USA, married Maria Brandt, 6 children

Abraham - born 28 December 1876 in the USA, married Maria Schmidt, 7 children

Elisabeth (Lizzie) - born 28 November 1880 in Marion County, Kansas, married  
Jakob J Schmidt, 4 children

The family immigrated from Berdyansk to the USA aboard the *S S Holsatia*, leaving from  
Hamburg and Le Havre, arriving in New York 1 July 1874

They then settled in Kansas. Jakob died 31 October 1910 in Goessel, Kansas

Maria died 27 September 1920 in Canton, Kansas, of heart failure

#### **Enns, Peter**

Born 10 September 1832 in Tiede, Molotschna

Baptized 1853 in Ohrloff, Molotschna

Married **Elisabeth Reimer**, who was born 19 September 1835

The family lived in Berdyansk, where some, probably all of the first 13 children were born  
Elisabeth died either late 1881 or early 1882

Peter then married Eva Berg 14 February 1882, not sure where they lived

They had 7 additional children, the first 2 born in Russia

Peter and Eva immigrated to the USA in 1885, moving from place to place, finally settling  
in Newton, Kansas; the last 5 children were born in Newton, Kansas

Children:

**Abraham** - born 1855

**Peter** - born 10 April 1857 in Berdyansk, married Gertruda \_\_\_\_\_ 22 February 1877,  
lived in Neu Schoensee, Sagra dovka Colony, 2 children

**Jacob** - born 1858

**Isaak** - born 1860

**Johann** - born 1861, died "young"

**Heinrich** - born 1862

**David** - born 13 August 1863 in Berdyansk, baptized 1883 in Tiede, Molotschna,  
married Helena Grunwald 25 January 1895 in Newton, Kansas, 3 children,  
died 8 July 1935

**Johann** - born 1866, died "young"

**Johann** - born about 1868

**Elisabeth** - born about 1869

**Gerhard** - born about 1871

**Diedrich** - born about 1881

**Anna** - born about 1882 (this may actually be the same Anna as the next child on the list)

The following are the children of Eva Berg

Anna - born 11 September 1882

Katharina - born 16 October 1884, said to be born in Schoensee, Prussia

Margaretha - born 2 March 1886

Cornelius - born 23 April 1887

Agneha - born 6 April 1889 in Newton, Kansas

Sara - born 8 April 1893 in Newton, Kansas

Maria - born 7 December 1900

Father Peter died 11 August 1904 in Newton, Kansas

Eva joined the Salem Evangelical Church 14 May 1922, so she lived at least until then

### **Ennsz, Heinrich**

Born about 1829

Lived in the Bergthal Colony

Had close relatives in the Bergthal Colony

Came to Berdyansk by at least 1851

Worked as a miller

### **Entz, Isaak Abraham**

Born 27 June 1807, possibly in Schoenwiese

Parents Abraham Entz and Katharina Martens

Married **Margaretha Harder** in 1831, likely in Schoenwiese, Chortitza Colony

Children:

Jakob - born 13 December 1831, died 22 January 1837

**Abraham** - born 25 December 1832

Married **Agatha Thiessen** 25 November 1854

She was born 29 December 1837 in Elbing, West Prussia

Children:

**Abraham** - born about 1857

**Margaretha** - born about 1859

**Isaak** - born about 1865

**Jakob** - born about 1866

**Agathe** - born about 1867

**Maria** - born about 1869

**Aganetha** - born 1873

**Johann** - born 1874

Migrated from Berdyansk to Kansas in 1874

Father Abraham died 23 November 1875 in Herington, Kansas

Mother Agatha died 13 June 1913 in Inman, Kansas

Isaak - born 18 January 1835, died 7 February 1835

**Margaretha** - born 21 July 1836 in Schoenwiese, Chortitza Colony

Married Heinrich C Janzen 6 September 1855, he was also from Schoenwiese

Immigrated to USA, Mountain Lake, Minnesota

Margaretha died 28 June 1888 in Mountain Lake

**Katharina** - born 31 January 1839, died 2 November 1841

**Jakob** - born 27 July 1843, married Maria Hildebrand in 1865, 5 children who died in infancy and youth, immigrated to USA in 1877

**Maria** - born 4 April 1847, died 15 May 1922

**Katharina** - born 25 May 1852, died 22 October 1859

Mother Margaretha died 7 February 1873, likely in Berdyansk

Father Isaak died 11 September 1894 in USA

### **Epp, David**

Born 3 December 1886 in Ekaterinoslav

Married **Mathilda Fast** in Ekaterinoslav

She was born 14 July 1885 in Ekaterinoslav

Her parents were Johann J Fast and Katharina Isaak

Baptized 17 May 1904 in Chortitza, Chortitza Colony

Not sure when they moved to Berdyansk

Children:

**David** - born 1912, died as an infant

**Heinrich** - born 28 January 1925 in Berdyansk, married Hildegard P Dyck 31 July 1954 in Winnipeg, Canada, Heinrich worked for the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation, 4 children

Father David attended university in Germany, was exiled, died 1937

Mathilda migrated to Canada, likely after World War II, died 13 February 1957 in Winnipeg

### **Epp, David Heinrich**

Born 30 May 1861 in Chortitza, Chortitza Colony

Father Heinrich Dietrich Epp

Educated in the local *Dorfschule* and then the Chortitza *Zentralschule*

Taught at Osterwick and Rosental 1878-1899

In 1883 he married **Anna Hamm**, she was born in 1864

The couple had 3 sons, one of whom died in early childhood

1886 minister of the Chortitza Mennonite congregation

1899 pastor of the Ekaterinoslav congregation

1905 began publication of *Der Botschafter* in Ekaterinoslav

1912 moved to Berdyansk, where he continued as editor of *Der Botschafter* and did church work. In the publication he was helped and supported by H A Ediger

For many years chairman of the *Kommission fuer Kirchliche Angelegenheiten (KfK)* which was organized in 1910

1912 became editor of the *Mennonitisches Jahrbuch*

1914 *Der Botschafter* was closed down by the government, likely in October

House was robbed in 1920

1922 appointed as a member of the committee to distribute food packages to the Mennonites



in Berdyansk

He himself also requested food draft via *Mennonitische Rundschau* 7 June 1922

Address at the time was Kolonie 2te Linie No 4

Signed the letter of thanks for food packages written by Elder Leonhard Sudermann in late 1922

1923 the Lichtenau congregation asked him to minister to their disorganized congregation  
1927 called to be elder of his home Chortitza Mennonite congregation. This he did despite increasing difficulty. Resigned in 1931, but continued to work privately.

David suffered a number of strokes, and died 30 May 1934

Anna, who had also been ill, died shortly after David, also in 1934

David H Epp was best known for his writings, and his compassionate church work

Some of the books were:

*Die Chortitzer Mennoniten* (1889)

*Kurze Erklarung und Erlaeuterungen zum Katechismus* (1896)

*J Cornies, Zuege aus seinem Leben und Wirken* (1909)

*Die Memriker Ansiedlung* (1910)

He also wrote articles for many periodicals: *Mennonitische Blaetter*, *Odessaer Zeitung*, *Mennonitisches Jahrbuch*, *Unser Blatt*, *Der Bote*, and of course his own publication *Der Botschafter*

### **Epp, Marie**

Born about 1920

Son Harry age 4; not sure where he would have been born, but not likely in Berdyansk

On ship *Marine Tiger* arrived in Halifax, Canada on 29 October 1948

### **Esau, Gerhard Jakob**

Formerly from Altona, Molotschna

In 1922 lived in Berdyansk; requested food packages via the *Mennonitische Rundschau*,  
31 May 1922

Address: Sadovaya Street, No 57

Looking for Nikolai, Dietrich, Johann, and Gerhard Dueck, formerly Elisabetthal, Molotschna,  
now in Minnesota

### **Esau, Heinrich**

Born 5 February 1820 in Gross Lesewitz, Grosswerder, West Prussia

Parents Heinrich Esau and Gertrude von Riesen

Married **Helena von Bergen**

She was born 8 November 1817 in Aschbuden, West Prussia

Children:

**Heinrich** - born 10 March 1847 in Ellerwald, Prussia

**Johann** - born 1849 in Duerbeck, Prussia

After the birth of the children the family must have moved to Berdyansk

Father Heinrich died 1865 in Berdyansk

Helena died before 1869, also in Berdyansk

### **Esau, Jacob**

He married **Maria Sudermann**

Children:

**Maria** - born 7 February 1868 in Berdyansk, married Tobias Boese 11 June 1885

**Ewert, Wilhelm P**

Born 11 May 1814 Montauerweide, Prussia

Wife **Anna Doerksen** - born 20 July 1817

Married about 1834

Moved to Berdyansk sometime before 1855

Children:

Wilhelm (Willie)

**Gerhard** - born 28 September 1855 in Berdyansk, married 20 November 1883, children  
Jacob and Woldemar, baptized in Kuban Colony 1887, immigrated to the USA in  
1923, died 30 December 1926

Invited guests to the wedding of Heinrich Peter Bahnmann and Katharina Wiens on  
11 January 1877

**Ewert, Wilhelm Wilhelm**

Born about 1848

Could be the son of Wilhelm P Ewert

Wife, **Mrs Ewert**

He lived in Berdyansk in 1923

Had uncles Gerhard Neufeld and Dietrich Neufeld, originally from Rudnerweide, Molotschna,  
who had immigrated to North America

Had at least 1 daughter, **Mrs Isaak Isaak Wiens**, who in 1923 lived in Nikolaifeld,  
Station Suvorovskaya

**Falk, Jakob**

Requested food draft via *Mennonitische Rundschau* 7 June 1922

Address: 3te Linie in Berdyansk

**Falk, Mr**

Married **Anna**, who was born 7 May 1900 in Berdyansk

Child **Helena** - born 2 June 1927 in Berdyansk

Anna was living at 7 Linie No7 in Berdyansk in 1942

**Falk, Mr**

Wife **Mrs Falk**

Daughter **Anna** born 1899 in Berdyansk

She lived in Berdyansk at Sredniy 18 in 1942

It is possible that Falk was her married name

**Falk, Mr**

Wife **Mrs Falk**

Daughter **Helena** - born 14 March 1838 in Berdyansk, she married Abram Johann Unger,  
who was born 2 November 1835 in the Chortitza Colony, lived in Sergeyevka,  
5 children, both Helena and Abram died in Sergeyevka, Fuerstenland Colony

**Fast, Agatha (Agathe)**

Nee Lenzmann

Widow

Requested food draft via *Mennonitische Rundschau* 7 June 1922

Signed the letter of thanks for food packages written by Elder Leonhard Sudermann in late 1922

**Fast, David**

Born about 1806

Father Johann Fast, of Farm No 7 of Rudnerweide, Molotschna

Wife **Katharina** - born about 1814

Children:

**Johann** born about 1844

**Maria** - born about 1850

Moved from Rudnerweide, Molotschna; elected as deacon for the Berdyansk church in 1848

Owned a flour mill in Berdyansk by 1852

Invited guests to the wedding of Heinrich Peter Bahnmann and Katharina Wiens on  
11 January 1877

**Fast, Elisabeth**

Widow

Requested food draft via *Mennonitische Rundschau* 7 June 1922

Address: 5 Linie No 3

Looking for Abraham Fast, formerly of Grossweide, Molotschna

**Fast, Gerhard**

Born about 1819

Stepfather Abraham Kornelsen lived in Fuerstenwerder, Molotschna Farm No 26

Wife **Katharina** - born about 1827

Children:

**Katharina** - born about 1825

**Anna** - born about 1849

**Gerhard** - born about 1851

Moved from Fuerstenwerder to Berdyansk by 1852

Gerhard worked as a miller

**Fast, Gerhard Gerhard**

Formerly from Bytschak

In 1922 lived in Berdyansk; requested food packages via the *Mennonitische Rundschau*,  
31 May 1922

Address: Italyanskaya Street, No 32

Looking for Franz A Klassen, Los Angeles, California

**Fast, Maria D**

Children:

**Viktor**

**Annemarie**

Migrated from Berdyansk to Canada, landing in Quebec 15 October 1926; they then  
settled in Laird, Saskatchewan

**Fast, Mr**

Son of Johann Fast

Graduate of school in Alexanderfeld, then of city school in Berdyansk (*Realschule*?)

Third teacher, hired in 1904, of the four-class school in Alexanderheim  
His father was teacher there from 1887 until at least 1910

**Fast, Peter Peter**

Graduate of the Ohrloff *Zentralschule*, then of the Halbstadt Pedagogical courses  
Village teacher for a few years  
Studied privately, passed the exams at the historical-philosophy faculty at the University of Moscow  
Taught Russian language at the Halbstadt *Zentralschule* 1895-98  
Worked for the finance ministry for a number of years, then taught German at the *Gymnasium* in Feodosia  
In 1909 became director of the *Realschule* established by A A Neufeld in Berdyansk, after the unexpected death of Neufeld  
In late 1911 he received a citation, Order of the Holy Anna, Third Class  
Died in 1916

**Federau, Anna**

Signed the letter of thanks for food packages written by Elder Leonhard Sudermann in late 1922

**Federau, Heinrich**

Born 11 January 1879 in Berdyansk  
Married Maria Neufeld, who was born 13 March 1885 in Ladekopp, Molotschna  
First lived in Ufa where 2 children were born  
The by 1913 moved to Svistunovo, Barnaul, Asiatic Russia, where another 9 children were born  
Moved to Schamanavke near the Chinese border  
17 December 1929 the whole village fled across the Amur River ice to Harbin, where they stayed for 4 years

**Federau, Mr**

Wife **Mrs Federau**

Daughter **Elisabeth** - born 7 July 1871 in Berdyansk  
She lived in Berdyansk at Sadovaya 59 in 1942  
It is possible that Federau was her married name

**Fehderau, Aaron**

Married **Anna Willems**

Invited guests to the wedding of Heinrich Peter Bahnmann and Katharina Wiens on 11 January 1877

Son **Salomon** - born 19 February 1878 in Berdyansk, married Maria Rempel, who was born 4 February 1880 in Gnadenfeld, Molotschna, lived in Gnadenfeld, then Nikopol, then again Gnadenfeld, 4 children, Salomon died 14 April 1920 in Gnadenfeld, Maria died 28 February 1962 in Chilliwack, BC

**Fehderau, Aron Jakob**

In 1922 lived in Berdyansk; requested food packages via the *Mennonitische Rundschau*, 31 May 1922

Address: Vostotschnyy Prospect, No 11  
Looking for Wilhelm Salomon Fehderau

**Fehderau, Franz J**

Married **Aganetha Mierau**, who was born 10 May 1873

Her parents were Jacob Mierau and Susanna Loewen

They first lived in Berdyansk, then by 1901 had moved to Oqus-Tobe, Crimea

Children:

**Abram** - born 30 June 1894 in Berdyansk, married Gertruda Dick 28 August 1918,

2 children

Maria - born 1 September 1901 in Oqus-Tobe, Crimea

**Fehderau, Heinrich Jakob**

In 1922 lived in Berdyansk; requested food packages via the *Mennonitische Rundschau*,

31 May 1922

Address: Kolonie 2te Linie, No 7

Looking for Wilhelm Salomon Fehderau

Signed the letter of thanks for food packages written by Elder Leonhard Sudermann in late 1922

**Fehderau, Jakob Johann**

Married **Elisabeth Willms**

Invited guests to the wedding of Heinrich Peter Bahnmann and Katharina Wiens on

11 January 1877

Children:

**Jakob** - born 1 October 1865 in Berdyansk

Married Maria Bahnmann 6 April 1890

She was born 1 January 1867, parents Peter P Bahnmann and Maria Martens

They had 6 children, all born on the Marianovka Estate

Jakob died 15 July 1922 in Halbstadt

Maria died 11 February 1946 in Kitchener, Ontario

**Fehderau, Jakob Johann**

Married **Justina Konrad**

Children:

Johann (Hans)

Jakob

**Anni** - born 1914

**Peter**

Lived in Crimean village Beck-Balatschi

1926 sold and bought farm in Oqus-Tobe, 5 km from the Sea of Azov

Moved to Berdyansk in 1936 with youngest 2 children

Left Berdyansk in 1941 with outbreak of the war

Jakob and Justina died in 1947, Justina of starvation

**Fehderau, Johann**

Invited guest to the wedding of Heinrich Peter Bahnmann and Katharina Wiens on

11 January 1877

**Fehderau, Salomon**

Invited guest to the wedding of Heinrich Peter Bahnmann and Katharina Wiens on

11 January 1877

**Franz, Jakob Jakob**

In 1922 lived in Berdyansk; requested food packages via the *Mennonitische Rundschau*,  
31 May 1922

Address: Vostotschnyy Prospect, No 33

Looking for Isbrand Friesen of Inman, Kansas

**Friesen, Abraham Cornelius**

Married **Helena Abrahams**

Daughter **Katharina (Katie)** - born 30 November 1882 in Berdyansk, Katharina and parents immigrated to Kansas in 1891, baptized in Buhler Kansas 6 September 1906, went to Bethel College, taught in country school, later worked for publisher, married Heinrich (Henry) Peter Krehbiel 26 November 1936 in Hutchinson, Kansas, he died 2 December 1940

**Friesen, Cornelius**

Elected minister of the Berdyansk congregation 27 July 1864

Invited guest to the wedding of Heinrich Peter Bahnmann and Katharina Wiens on 11 January 1877; he died a few years after 1877

**Friesen, David Peter**

Formerly of Altona, Molotschna, in 1922 lived in Berdyansk

Requested food packages via the *Mennonitische Rundschau* 31 May 1922

Address: Vosnessenskaya Street, No 55

Looking for Johannes Mueller, formerly from Switzerland

Signed letter of thanks for food packages written by Elder Leonhard Sudermann in late 1922

**Friesen, Heinrich Kornelius**

Born 15 November 1835 in Berdyansk (one source lists 24 September 1835)

Parents Kornelius and Helena Friesen, who were married about 1828

13 children, the first 4 likely born in Schoenwiese, Heinrich was the fourth child was born in Berdyansk, moved to Pastwa, Molotschna Colony in 1836

Married **Sarah Jantzen** 14 November 1857 in Gnadenfeld

She was born 1838 in Gnadenfeld, Molotschna

Her parents were Johann Jantzen and Maria Sudermann

After the marriage they lived in Berdyansk; Heinrich's occupation is not known

Children: (13, all born in Berdyansk)

**Heinrich** - born 1859, died 1881

**Maria** - born 1860, died 1861

**Johann** - born 1862

**Kornelius** - born 1864, died 1865

**Helena** - born 1866, died 1900

**Sarah** - born 1868

**Abraham** - born 1870

**Peter** - born 1871, died 1928

**Maria** - born 1873

**Gerhard** - born 1875, married Maria Dick, daughter of Jakob Dick and Katharina Wiebe of Tiege, Molotschna, first lived in Tiege, then by 1903 moved to the newly

founded Terek Colony, had 2 children, Gerhard (1901) and Jacob (1903), Gerhard died in a livestock robbery in 1903 when he attempted to intervene and was shot by the Cossack robbers, Maria returned to her family in the Molotschna, married Johann Wiebe, they had 9 more children

**Katharina** - born 1878, died 1878

**Anna** - born 1879

**Katharina** - born 12 December 1881, baptized 14 May 1898 in Ogus-Tobe, Crimea, married Johann Rempel 27 May 1908 in Ogus-Tobe, he was born 22 December 1876 in Paulsheim, Molotschna, she transferred from the Gnadenfeld to the Busau Church in the Crimea, 5 children, all born in the Crimea

Heinrich and Sarah were invited guests to the wedding of Heinrich Peter Bahnmann and Katharina Wiens on 11 January 1877

Heinrich and Sarah moved to the Crimea in 1883, likely to Ogus-Tobe

Heinrich died 1884 in the Crimea

Sarah likely remarried; she died 5 February 1919 in the Crimea

### **Friesen, Heinrich Bernhard**

Wife **Mrs Friesen**

Both shot and killed in 1920

### **Friesen, Hermann**

Invited guest to the wedding of Heinrich Peter Bahnmann and Katharina Wiens on 11 January 1877

### **Friesen, Isbrand Isbrand**

Parents Isbrand Isbrand and Margarita Friesen, from Bolwerk, Elbing Region, West Prussia Settled in Tiegenhagen, Molotschna in 1805, when young Isbrand was about half a year old

Father was age 35 at the time, a carpenter, mother was age 35

Lived in Tiegenhagen Farm No 4 in 1835

Originally moved from Tiegenhagen, Molotschna to Berdyansk likely about 1840

Wife **Selma** - born about 1821

Children:

**Amalia** - born about 1839

**Hermann** - born about 1841

**Louise** - born about 1842

**Selma** - born about 1845

**Malvine** - born about 1849

**Emil**

Built the first treadmill in Berdyansk in 1840

In 1848, under the supervision of Pordenau Church Elder Heinrich Toews, he was elected as minister of the Mennonite Church, he then led worship services on alternate Sundays.

Sold his treadmill during the Crimean War

Chairman of the Agricultural Society of Berdyansk

President of the Berdyansk administration for 9 years

For 18 years director of the bank of the city of Berdyansk

Honourary judge



By 1870 he no longer considered himself to be a Mennonite, having withdrawn from the Mennonite church

Invited guest to the wedding of Heinrich Peter Bahnmann and Katharina Wiens on 11 January 1877

Died 1883

**Friesen, J**

Wife **Mrs Friesen**

Daughter Emilie, who married Heinrich Abram Ediger, probably about 1885

Friesen was a wealthy mill owner

**Friesen, Jacob**

Wife **M**

Daughter **Anna**

Lived in Wiesenfeld, and in 1919 were driven from their home

In 1923 were in Berdyansk, obviously as refugees

They wrote a letter of thanks to David M Hofer and the MCC for the help they had received

**Friesen, Kornelius**

Wife **Helena**, married about 1828, 13 children, lived in Schoenwiese, Berdyansk, Pastwa

First **3 children** likely lived in Berdyansk for some time

Fourth child Heinrich - born 15 November 1835 in Berdyansk

(see separate listing for Heinrich Kornelius Friesen)

**Friesen, Martha**

Parents lived in Halbstadt

Good friend of Katharina Dyck (later wife of Alexander Ediger)

Attended college in Kharkov together, transferred to Berdyansk in 1918, because it was safer

**Friesen, Mr**

Wife **Mrs Friesen**

Son **Gerhard** - born 19 October 1875 in Berdyansk

He was baptized 24 May 1892 in Gnadenfeld

Married Maria Dick 3 August 1900

At first lived in Tiege, Molotschna, where first child Gerhard was born, then moved to Sulak,

Terek Colony, where second child Jacob was born

Gerhard was killed in Sulak 15 September 1903

**Friesen Mr**

Wife **Mrs Friesen**

Daughter **Maria** - born 25 April 1889 in Berdyansk

She lived in Berdyansk at Vaksalia 28 in 1942

It is possible that Friesen was her married name

**Friesen, Peter**

Invited guest to the wedding of Heinrich Peter Bahnmann and Katharina Wiens on 11 January 1877

**Funk, Johann**

Invited guest to the wedding of Heinrich Peter Bahnmann and Katharina Wiens on 11 January 1877

**Gerbrandt, Bernhard**

Formerly of Gnadental, Molotschna, therefore probably a refugee

Requested food draft via *Mennonitische Rundschau* 7 June 1922

Address: Voronzovskaya Strasse No 85

Looking for Bernhard Gerbrandt, Buhler, Kansas

**Goerz, David**

Born 2 June 1849 in Neu-Bereslav near Berdyansk

Parents Heinrich and Agnes Goerz

Attended *Vereinsschule* in Ohrloff, Molotschna

At the age of 18 was baptized, and began to teach in Berdyansk

Teacher in the Mennonite elementary school in Berdyansk 1869-1873

Married **Helene Riesen** 1870 or 1871

Immigrated to USA in 1873, where he continued as a teacher, edited a paper, managed a publishing house, and was secretary of the Mennonite Board of Guardians, was one of the founders of Bethel College Corporation

Known as a great organizer, inspirer and leader

Died 7 May 1914 in California

**Goossen, Heinrich**

Born about 1817

Father Franz Goossen of Farm No 25 of Marienthal, Molotschna

Wife **Maria** - born about 1818

Son **Heinrich** - born about 1839

Moved from Marienthal, Molotschna to Berdyansk by 1852

Worked as a tailor

**Gorsching, Jakob**

Born 15 September 1846

Married **Katharina Schmidt** 18 November 1871

She was born 10 January 1852

Her parents were August Schmidt and Helena Bretkowski

Children:

**Katharina** - born 16 December 1875 in Berdyansk, baptized May 1894, married Jacob J Schmidt 2 February 1896 in Alexanderwohl, Marion County, Kansas, 7 children, died 18 November 1942 in Cordell, Oklahoma

Elisabeth

Maria

Karolina

Jakob

Peter

Alfred

The family certainly lived in Berdyansk around 1875. It is not known how many of the children besides Katharina were born there

Migrated to the USA some time after 1875, likely settling in Oklahoma

Wife Katharina died 29 June 1909

Jakob married Pauline Jaworsky 13 March 1910

Jakob died 5 June 1927

### **Guenther, Dietrich**

Married **Maria Janzen**, sister of Margaretha (wife of Nikolai Wiens)

Her parents Heinrich Peter Janzen and Anna Hamm, later owners of Estate Silberfeld

Dietrich was a grain broker; the Guentheres were long-time residents of Berdyansk

Were invited to the wedding of Heinrich Bahnmann and Katharina Wiens on 11 January 1877

Children:

Maria - born about 1845, married Jakob P Bahnmann 19 February 1870 in the Berdyansk  
(see Jakob, son of Peter Jakob Bahnmann)

**Dietrich** - married **Anna Klassen** about March 1871 in Berdyansk

Children:

**Michael** - died April 1879

**Son** - died April 1879

**Son** - died February 1879

Wife Anna died February 1879

Dietrich married his cousin **Maria Wiens** 12 July 1879 (see page 148)

She was born 5 December 1855

Her parents were Nikolai Johann Wiens and Margaretha Janzen

Children:

**Nikolai** - born 1880, married, large family by 1927

**Daughter** - born 1881, died 1882

**Dietrich** - born 1882, died 1883

Maria died 28 December 1882

**Heinrich** - born 26 October 1858 in Berdyansk

Married Elisabeth Reimer, born 28 February 1859 in Ohrloff, Molotschna

Probably lived in Ohrloff, 8 children born 1881-1893

Immigrated to Canada in 1924

Heinrich died 18 August 1932 in Winnipeg

Elisabeth died 9 August 1940 in Sardis, B C

**Child -**

Father Dietrich died 13 January 1878, Mother Maria died July 1906

### **Guenther, Mr**

Owner of Guenther & Co, which sold rope made of sisal and manila

Advertised in *Christlicher Familienkalendar* in 1912

### **Hamm, Peter**

Born 22 March 1817 in Usnitz, Prussia

Parents Peter Hamm and Anna Dyck

Married **Helena Penner** 30 November 1847

She was born 5 October 1826 in South Russia

Her parents Bernhard Penner and Helena Hiebert

Not sure where the couple lived, but likely by the mid 1860s in Berdyansk

Children: (some of whom may have been born in Berdyansk, most probably lived there)

Peter - born 28 January 1849, died 26 March 1849

**Peter** - born 4 April 1850

**Helena** - born 1 January 1855

**Johann** - born 29 September 1857, died 7 October 1857

**Johann** - born 22 September 1858

**Gerhard** - born 14 February 1860

**Jacob** - born 18 October 1862

**Bernhard** - born 18 February 1865

Father Peter died 2 August 1867 in Berdyansk

Mother Helena died 12 December 1916 in Rural Municipality of Rhineland, Manitoba

### **Harder, Abraham Jakob**

Born 19 October 1823, probably in Schoenwiese, Chortitza Colony

Parents Jakob Abraham Harder and Margaretha Graewe

Moved from Schoenwiese to Berdyansk, presumably with family, in 1836

Worked as some type of a manager

Married **Anna Enns** 6 July 1846, she was born about 1826

Had 10 children: only 4 specifically named

**Anna** - born 21 May 1849, married Wilhelm Rempel 1 November 1867 of the Bergthal Colony, immigrated to Mountain Lake, Minnesota

**Abraham** - born about 1850

**Margaretha** - born about 1852

Maria - born 2 November 1856, married David H Epp  
(see separate listing under Maria Harder)

Other **6 children** likely lived in Berdyansk

Anna Enns died 24 November 1869

Abraham married Anna Flaming 1870

3 additional children

Anna Flaming died, sometime before 1879

Abraham married Aganetha Toews 9 September 1879

Had another 3 children

Father Abraham Jakob Harder died 15 July 1883

### **Harder, Barbara**

Invited guest to the wedding of Heinrich Peter Bahnmann and Katharina Wiens on  
11 January 1877

### **Harder, Jakob Abraham**

Born 4 August 1789 in Marienwerder, West Prussia

Married **Maria Graewe** November 1809

She was born 15 January 1786 in Marienwerder, West Prussia

Family migrated from Prussia to Schoenwiese, Chortitza Colony, in 1818, then to Berdyansk  
likely in 1836, Jakob worked at various trades

Children:

**Jakob** - born 15 August 1810 in Prussia, likely to Schoenwiese with parents in 1818,  
married Katharina Hooze 16 March 1841, 3 children, probably moved to Bergthal

Colony, then to East Reserve, Manitoba

**Johann** - born 9 March 1812 in Marienwerder, West Prussia, married Anna Falk  
21 February 1833 in Schoenwiese, moved to Bergthal Colony, 7 sons, died  
19 April 1849 in Bergthal Colony

Margaretha - born 15 October 1815 in Marienwerder, West Prussia  
(see separate listing Margaretha Entz)

Maria - born about 1817, died young, before 1819

**Maria** - born 22 August 1819, baptized 1839, married Jacob Harder 24 September 1840,  
10 children, lived in Rueckenau, Molotschna, immigrated to Mountain Lake,  
Minnesota, died 15 November 1891

Abraham - born 19 October 1823, likely in Schoenwiese  
(see separate listing Abraham Jakob Harder)

Mother Margaretha died 1 August 1844 in Berdyansk

Father Jakob Abraham Harder died 21 March 1857 in Berdyansk

#### **Harder, Maria**

Born 2 November 1856 (other sources 2 November 1853 and 11 February 1856)

Parents Abraham Jakob Harder and Anna Enns

Married David Heinrich Epp, who was born 18 February 1854 in Rosenort, Molotschna

His parents were Heinrich Heinrich Epp and Justina H Willms

Married about 1880

Lived first in Tiegerweide, Molotschna, then in Fischau

Had 7 children

David died 13 September 1909

#### **Harder, Nikolai**

Invited guest to the wedding of Heinrich Peter Bahnmann and Katharina Wiens on  
11 January 1877

#### **Hausknecht, Anna Johann**

Born 9 July 1802 in Goldschaar, West Prussia

Parents Abraham Sudermann and second wife Anna von Riesen

Fourth child of Abraham Sudermann

Baptized 11 June 1821 in Heubuden

Married Kaspar Adrian Hausknecht in Goldschaar

He was born 12 October 1790 in St Gallen, Switzerland, he was a teacher

Children:

David - born about 1833

Sara - born 1842 Insel Chortitza, Chortitza Colony

Sara died 1898 in Halbstadt, Molotschna

Family migrated to Insel Chortitza sometime before 1842

Husband Kaspar Hausknecht died 27 May 1848 Insel Chortitza

Wife Anna at some point moved to Berdyansk

She died in Berdyansk in 1873

#### **Heidebrecht, D**

Signed the letter of thanks for food packages written by Elder Leonhard Sudermann in late 1922

**Heidebrecht, Gerhard Peter**

In 1922 lived in Berdyansk; requested food packages via the *Mennonitische Rundschau*,  
31 May 1922

Address: Voronzovskaya Street No 88

Looking for Peter Peter Heidebrecht

Signed the letter of thanks for food packages written by Elder Leonhard Sudermann in late 1922

**Heidebrecht, J**

Signed the letter of thanks for food packages written by Elder Leonhard Sudermann in late 1922

**Heidebrecht, Kornelius**

Son of Peter Jakob Heidebrecht

Previously from Schoenfeld, Alexandrovsk region

In 1922 lived in Berdyansk, requested food packages via the *Mennonitische Rundschau*,  
31 May 1922

Address: Voronzovskaya Street, No 88

Looking for Peter Peter Heidebrecht

Signed the letter of thanks for food packages written by Elder Leonhard Sudermann in late 1922

**Heidebrecht, Susanna (Suse)**

Signed the letter of thanks for food packages written by Elder Leonhard Sudermann in late 1922

Probably the wife of one of the other Heidebrechts listed

**Heinrichs, Jakob**

Born about 1832

Stepfather Jakob Berg of Farm No 2 of Marienthal, Molotschna

Moved from Marienthal, Molotschna to Berdyansk by 1852

Worked as miller's assistant

**Heinrichs, Jakob Jakob**

Born 5 September 1888, probably on the Korneyevka Estate

Married **Susanna Neufeld** 13 October 1918 in Waldheim, Molotschna

She was born 19 February 1894 in Waldheim, Molotschna

She was the daughter of Isaak Isaak Neufeld and Anna Koehn

Requested food draft via *Mennonitische Rundschau* 7 June 1922

Address: Selyonaya Strasse No 36, Berdyansk

Looking for Abram David Koehn, California

Susanna (Susi) signed the letter of thanks for food packages written by Elder Leonhard  
Sudermann in late 1922

Children:

**Elfriede** - born 28 January 1922 in Berdyansk

She married **Artur Kerber**, who was also born in Berdyansk 18 September 1923,  
lived in Tschelyabinsk, Kazakhstan, 4 children

**Albert** - born 1 March 1925 in Berdyansk

He married Raisa Simanova, 3 children, lived in Solikamsk, Ural Mountains

**Rita** - born 19 November 1928 in Berdyansk

She married Friedebert Schuller, 4 children

Jakob died 13 January 1938, Susanna died 24 November 1941, both in exile

**Hiebert (also called Huebert), David**

Born about 25 August 1837

Parents Jakob Hiebert and Maria Dueck

Married **Sara Penner**, who was born about 1840

Moved from Grossweide, Molotschna to Berdyansk in 1860 and purchased a treadmill

Elected as deacon of the Berdyansk Mennonite Church 27 July 1864

Invited guests to the wedding of Heinrich Peter Bahnmann and Katharina Wiens

11 January 1877

In 1869 he built a steam-powered flour mill

Children:

**Agatha** - born about 1860, probably in Berdyansk

**Sara** - born 8 November 1861 in Berdyansk, married Isaak A Bagen 28 December 1886  
in Mountain Lake, 12 children, died 2 June 1934 in Mountain Lake

**Katharina** - born 24 March 1866 in Berdyansk, married Wilhelm P Rempel  
31 December 1889, 5 children, died 7 May 1955, likely in Mountain Lake

**Jakob** - born about 1868 in Berdyansk

**Elisabeth** - born about 1871 in Berdyansk

**Anna** - born about 1873 in Berdyansk

The whole family migrated to the USA, boarding the *S S Vaderland* in Antwerp, landing in  
Philadelphia 29 June 1877

They then settled in Mountain Lake, Minnesota

David died 5 August 1895 in Mountain Lake

**Hiebert (also called Huebert), Dietrich**

Invited guest to the wedding of Heinrich Peter Bahnmann and Katharina Wiens on

11 January 1877

**Hiebert (also called Huebert), Gerhard**

Born 10 July 1839, baptized 1859

Married **Susanna Enns** who was born about 1842

Probably from the start of the marriage or soon after moved to Berdyansk

Children:

**Jakob** - born 27 May 1863, probably in Berdyansk,  
baptized in Mountain Lake, Minnesota 1885

**Elisabeth** - born 6 January 1866 in Berdyansk,  
baptized in Mountain Lake, Minnesota 1885  
married Heinrich P Goertz 1886, 3 children

**Gerhard** - born 13 September 1868 in Berdyansk  
baptized 9 May 1902, married Helena Penner, 3 children,  
died 1934 in Winnipeg

**David** - born 24 March 1870 in Berdyansk, died as an infant

**David** - born 20 April 1871 in Berdyansk, married Marie W Dirks 19 June 1898  
in Mountain Lake, 5 children

**Susanna** - born 6 April 1873

Migrated to the USA: boarded the *S S Kenilworth* in Antwerp, landing in New York



17 July 1876, settling in Mountain Lake, Minnesota

Children born after the migration:

Johann - born 12 November 1876 in Mountain Lake

Peter - born 10 July 1879 in Mountain Lake

Wife Susanna died

Gerhard married Gertruda Nickel in 1882

Children of the second marriage:

Helena - born September 1883

Gertruda - born 18 March 1885

Anna - born 20 December 1886

**Hiebert (also called Huebert), Johann**

Invited guest to the wedding of Heinrich Peter Bahnmann and Katharina Wiens on  
11 January 1877

**Hiebert (probably also called Huebert), Peter**

Born 18 May 1823 in Margenau, Molotschna

Married **Anna Janzen** 1854 in Russia

She was born 1829 in Russia

Children:

**Peter** - born 20 September 1856, said to have been born in Baalau, Prussia, married  
Rosa Gunter, 9 children, died 12 January 1904 in Dickinson County, Kansas

**Jacob** - born 23 November 1859 in Berdyansk, married Amanda Weylan, 5 children,  
Amanda died, married Anna Bartel, Jacob died 30 August 1935 in Kansas

**Heinrich** - born 9 January 1862 in Berdyansk, married Anna Goerz, died 1 April 1917  
in Bruderthal, Kansas

**Nikolai (Nickolaus)** - born 4 October 1864 in Berdyansk, married Martha Goertz,  
12 children, died 29 January 1943 in Inglewood, California

**Abraham** - born 22 February 1873 in Berdyansk, married Lena Enns, who died, then  
married Mariah Peck, 3 children, Abraham died in 1961

The family immigrated from Berdyansk to the USA aboard the *S S Holsatia* departing  
Hamburg and Le Havre, arriving in New York 1 July 1874

They settled in Kansas

Anna died November 1881 in Morris County, Kansas

Peter died 24 February 1901 in Woodbine, Kansas

**Hildebrand, Gerhard**

Invited guest to the wedding of Heinrich Peter Bahnmann and Katharina Wiens 11 January 1877

**Hildebrand, Mr**

Wife **Mrs Hildebrand**

Daughter **Natalia** born 26 August 1904 in Berdyansk

She lived in Berdyansk at Arbeiterdig 4 in 1942

It is possible that Hildebrand was her married name

**Hildebrandt, Anastasia**

Born 1897 in Berdyansk, could have been a sister of Friedrich

Lived at N B Spuck 1 in Berdyansk in 1942

**Hildebrandt, Mr**

Wife **Mrs Hildebrandt**

Son **Friedrich** - born 21 April 1884 in Berdyansk, living at Schkolnaya 4 in Berdyansk in 1942

It is possible that Anastasia was also their daughter

**Hildebrandt, Nikolai**

Born 1917 in Berdyansk , possibly the son of Friedrich and **Mrs Hildebrandt**

Lived at N B Spuck 10 in Berdyansk in 1942

**Huebert, Agatha**

Born 28 November 1901 in Spat, Crimea

Parents Jakob Huebert and Margaretha Loewen

Married Johann (Hans) Strauss

Died 1940 in Berdyansk

**Huebert, Nikolai (Klaas)**

Formerly from Berdyansk , died 1914

Apparently there had been advertising looking for his children at the time

Letter to the editor of the MR in 1925, relatives wondering if some of the inheritance is still available

**Isaak, Anna**

Widow

Requested food draft via *Mennonitische Rundschau* 7 June 1922

Address: Sobatschya balka No 27

Looking for C Sudermann, Reedley, and Thomas Koop, Kansas

**Isaak, David**

Born about 1829

Father Abraham Isaak, of Farm No 8, Tiege, Molotschna

Moved from Tiege, Molotschna to Berdyansk by 1852

Worked as clerk for a merchant

**Isaak, Franz Jr**

Requested food draft via *Mennonitische Rundschau* 7 June 1922

Address: Blischniye Makorty

**Isaak, Philipp Abraham**

Born 14 April 1825 in Tiege, Molotschna

Father Abraham Isaak, of Farm No 8 in Tiege, Molotschna

Married **Helena Martens**

She was born 28 June 1826

Parents Jacob Paul Martens and Katharina Driedger

Moved from Tiege, Molotschna to Berdyansk by 1850

Philipp worked as clerk for a merchant

Children:

**Philipp** - born 20 April 1850 in Berdyansk

Married Katharina Penner from Waldheim, Molotschna, 9 children

Died 22 May 1937 near Omsk, Russia

Abraham - born 1857 in Blumenort, Molotschna  
The family moved to Blumenort by 1857  
Father Philipp died in Blumenort 5 October 1859

**Jantzen, Abraham**

Appointed as minister in the Berdyansk church by Gnadenfeld Mennonite Church in 1881  
Assaulted, late October 1906. One evening 2 men demanded to talk to him. When he came out to them they shot him. One bullet went into his abdomen and likely lodged in his spinal cord. His prognosis was thought to be hopeless

**Jantzen, Abr**

Signed the letter of thanks for food packages written by Elder Leonhard Sudermann in late 1922

**Jantzen, Elise**

Born 10 November 1860 in Orechow, Savitaya, Amur Region , mother died 5 days later  
Parents Johann Jantzen and Elisabeth Sudermann

Elisabeth was the daughter of Herrmann Sudermann, older brother of Leonhard  
Abraham Sudermann

She was accepted as foster daughter into the home of Leonhard Abraham Sudermann and his wife Maria and educated by them

Not sure when she entered the home

Immigrated to the USA with the Sudermanns in August 1876

Seems to have initially lived with the Sudermanns in Whitewater, Kansas

Married Gerhard Claassen 1 April 1880 in Whitewater, Kansas

7 children between 1881 and 1896

Elise and her husband were included in the thanks that Leonhard gave at various celebrations

She was present at Leonhard Sudermann's deathbed 26 January 1900

Died 10 March 1931 in Whitewater, Kansas

**Jantzen, Johann**

Born 30 March 1809 in Neunhuben, West Prussia

Parents Gerhard Jantzen and Anna Epp

Married Maria Sudermann 14 April 1835 in Goldschaar, West Prussia

Her parents were Abraham Sudermann and his second wife Anna von Riesen

She was the ninth child of Abraham Sudermann

Initially lived in Goldschaar, then by 1837 had migrated to Gnadenfeld, Molotschna

Family probably continued to live in Gnadenfeld where Johann died 15 December 1864, and

Maria died 11 February 1899

Had 12 children at least 2 of which had connections with Berdyansk

Children:

2. **Abraham** - born 2 March 1837 in Gnadenfeld, married **Helena Mierau**, probably lived in Berdyansk, died 2 December 1906 in Berdyansk

3. Sarah - born 15 November 1838 in Gnadenfeld, married Heinrich Kornelius Friesen, they lived in Berdyansk, had 13 children, 1883 moved to Crimea (see listing of Heinrich Kornelius Friesen)

**Janz, Isaak Sr**

Requested food draft via *Mennonitische Rundschau* 7 June 1922

Address: Blischniye Makorty

**Janzen, Abram**

Invited guest to the wedding of Heinrich Peter Bahnmann and Katharina Wiens on  
11 January 1877

**Janzen, Abram**

Wife **Mrs Janzen (nee Willms)**

**Children**

Abram was banished by 1920, and not heard from

His wife was the daughter of P Willms

In 1920 doing well

**Janzen, Cornelius**

(see biography of Cornelius Janzen)

He changed the spelling of his name to Jansen when he immigrated to the USA

Born 2 July 1822 in Tiegenhof, West Prussia

Married **Helena von Riesen**, born 1 December 1822 in Schidlitz, West Prussia

Children: (Margaretha born in Schidlitz, the rest in Berdyansk)

**Margaretha** - born 12 February 1849

**Peter** - born 21 March 1852

**Anna** - born 23 March 1856

**Johann** - born 16 October 1857

**Helena** - born 14 November 1858

**Heinrich** (renamed Cornelius when they migrated to the USA)

Grain merchant

Prussian Consul for several years

One of the enthusiastic advocates of immigration to the USA in the 1870s

Expelled from Russia in 1873

Arrived in Canada, the following year to the USA

Eventually lived in Beatrice, Nebraska, died there 14 December 1894

Wife Helena died 2 December 1897, also in Beatrice, Nebraska

**Janzen, Cornelius**

Invited guest to the wedding of Heinrich Peter Bahnmann and Katharina Wiens on  
11 January 1877

**Janzen, David David**

Formerly lived in Muntau, Molotschna

In 1922 lived in Berdyansk; requested food packages via the *Mennonitische Rundschau*,  
31 May 1922

Address: Vosnessenskaya Street, No 51

Looking for August Kofeld and David Schroeder of Lehigh, Kansas

**Janzen, H**

One of the investors involved with the Tokmak Railway

Was at the shareholder meeting held in Berdyansk 21 June 1911

Was nominated, but not elected into the executive

May have been the H Janzen who together with D Wiens was part owner of the

Wiens and Janzen Rope Factory

They eventually sold out to Peter Riediger

**Janzen, Heinrich Jakob**

Requested food draft via *Mennonitische Rundschau* 7 June 1922

Address: Italyonskaya Street No 36

**Janzen, Jacob Kornelius**

Born 7 August 1890

Parents Cornelius Janzen and Anna Peter Janzen

Married **Helena Wiebe**, who was born 1892

Children:

**Elly (Elfrieda?)** - born 10 March 1920 in Berdyansk, married Heinrich F Goertzen,  
3 children, lived in Winnipeg, Canada

**Sophie** - born 22 January 1926 in Berdyansk, married Heinrich Bestvater, 3 children,  
then married Jacob Neufeld

Helena died 1948 in Guestraw, Mecklenburg-Vorpommern

**Janzen, Johann**

Born about 1831

Lived in the Berghthal Colony, likely in the home of his father

Left Berghthal probably 18 November 1851, worked as a miller in Berdyansk

**Janzen, Kornelius**

Owned a house in Berdyansk

Possibly same person made request for food draft via *Mennonitische Rundschau* 7 June 1922

Looking for Heinrich Janzen, Mountain Lake, Minnesota

Signed letter of thanks for food packages written by Elder Leonhard Sudermann in late 1922

**Janzen, Michael Heinrich**

Born about 1819, probably in Schoensee, Molotschna

Parents Heinrich Peter Janzen and Anna Hamm

Heinrich and Anna Janzen later owned Estate Silberfeld

Married **Margaretha** \_\_\_\_\_

Children:

**Anna** - married Aaron Martens

**Helena** - married Aaron Martens

**Johann** (Hans)

Cornelius

Hermann

Jacob

Heinrich

Peter - born in Gnadenfeld, Molotschna, married Maria Cornies, who was born

14 July 1853 in the Taschtschenak region

The family lived in Berdyansk at least for some time in early 1877. Michael was one of the  
guests invited to the wedding of Heinrich Sudermann and Katharina Wiens

11 January 1877

Some of the children undoubtedly lived in Berdyansk as well

**Janzen, Mrs**

Widow, husband's name was Abraham

In 1922 lived in Berdyansk; requested food packages via the *Mennonitische Rundschau*,  
31 May 1922; Address: Vostotschnyy Prospect, No 17

Looking for Gerhard Janzen

**Janzen, P**

Represented Berdyansk at a meeting of the *Forstei* committee which met 4 May 1911 in the  
Chortitzer *Gegietsamt*. At the same meeting J F Matthies represented the Berdyansk  
region estate owners

**Kaethler, David**

Invited guest to the wedding of Heinrich Peter Bahnmann and Katharina Wiens on  
11 January 1877

**Kerber, Reinhard**

Requested food draft via *Mennonitische Rundschau* 7 June 1922

Address: Gostinaya Street No 60

Looking for Abraham Penner, Mountain Lake, Minnesota

Deacon of the Mennonite Church in late 1922

Signed letter of thanks for food packages written by Elder Leonhard Sudermann late 1922

**Ketler, Jakob**

Born about 1815

Wife **Helena** - born about 1821

Children:

**Katharina** - born about 1840

**Helena** - born about 1842

**Elisabeth** - born about 1845

**Anna** - born about 1846

**Maria** - born about 1848

**Eva** - born about 1850

Moved from Kronsweide, Chortitza Colony to Berdyansk in 1845

Jakob worked as a miller

**Klassen, Anna**

Good friend of Katharina Wiens

Participated in the wedding celebrations 11 January 1877

**Klassen, Cornelius**

Invited guest to the wedding of Heinrich Peter Bahnmann and Katharina Wiens on  
11 January 1877

**Klaasen, Dr**

Wife **Mrs Klassen**

Both shot and killed in 1920

**Klassen, Jakob**

Came from Schoeneberg, Chortitza, went to *Kommerzschule*

Apparently when he went back home he was considered to be too educated to be a minister,  
so he left his home village

**Klassen, Johann Gerhard**

Born 9 November 1890 in Insel Chortitza, Chortitza Colony

Married **Elisabeth Riediger** 27 November 1916 in Berdyansk

She was born 13 March 1897 in Berdyansk

Her Parents were Peter M Riediger and Susanna Heinrichs

They at first lived in Berdyansk, then moved to Kronsthal, Chortitza Colony by 1922

Children:

**Elsa** - born 20 October 1917 in Berdyansk, died 1921 in Berdyansk

**Irene** - born 25 August 1919 in Berdyansk, died 22 July 1973

Elsie - born 20 July 1922 in Kronsthal, married, lives in Russia

Susanna - born 11 September 1924 in Kronsthal

Aganeta - born 20 August 1926 in Kronsthal

Anna - born 9 June 1936, married, lives in Russia

Johann died 23 December 1959

Elisabeth died 29 January 1963

**Klassen, Mr**

Wife **Mrs Klassen**

Daughter **Klara** - born 1896 in Berdyansk

Lived at Vostotsch Prospect 19 in Berdyansk in 1942

**Klassen, Sara**

Good friend of Katharina Dyck (later wife of Alexander Ediger)

Attended college in Kharkov together, then transferred to Berdyansk in 1918, because it was thought to be safer

**Koop, Thomas**

Invited guest to the wedding of Heinrich Peter Bahnmann and Katharina Wiens on  
11 January 1877

**Krueger, Bernhard**

Born 16 January 1921 in Millerovo

Registered as living at Sobornaya 1 in Berdyansk in 1942

**Lehn, Elisabeth (Liese)**

Maiden name Ediger, born in the Molotschna

Teacher training in Berdyansk

Parents moved to Crimea in 1912, so she went to Crimea for holidays

1918 moved to Fernheim, Crimea, where she taught 3 years

Then to Spat, then last year in Okretch

Played a part in starting a school, where Johann Lehn was the director

**Lenzmann, Hermann August**

Born 21 December 1847, likely in Gnadenfeld

Son of Elder August Lenzmann of Gnadenfeld

Secondary education under Heinrich Franz, who was to become his father-in-law

Married **Helene Franz**

She was daughter of Heinrich Franz and Agatha Sudermann

Taught elementary school in Berdyansk in the 1860s



1868-1872 attended Theological Seminary in Barmen, Germany  
Thereafter Teachers College in Neuwied  
1873-1881 taught at Gnadenfeld *Zentralschule*, except 1875 when he studied at the  
University of Tuebingen  
1881-1898 taught at Halbstadt *Zentralschule*  
1898-1907 again taught at Gnadenfeld *Zentralschule*  
1907 established printing press in Tokmak, published many books  
Contentious in his career as teacher, rigid and strict  
In later years a recluse, embittered  
Heinrich Goerz called him "One of our most learned educators"  
Died 5 November 1924 in Halbstadt

**Loewen, D**

Invited guest to the wedding of Heinrich Peter Bahnmann and Katharina Wiens on  
11 January 1877

**Lohrenz, Heinrich**

Born 10 April 1838

Married **Katharina Berg**

She was born 13 December 1860 in South Russia

Died 10 September 1875 in South Russia

Probably was a carpenter

Moved to Berdyansk some time before 1866

Children:

**Katharina** - born 3 January 1866 in Berdyansk

Baptized 30 May 1887 in Henderson, Nebraska

Married Johann J Quiring 9 October 1887 in Henderson, Nebraska, 11 children

Died 1950 in Dallas, Oregon

**Jacob** - born 12 January 1868 in Berdyansk

Married Maria Goossen 22 November 1891 in Mountain Lake, Minnesota

Lived in Mountain Lake, 8 children, died 25 April 1931 in Mennon, Saskatchewan

**Maria** - born 1 October 1870 in Berdyansk,

Baptized 16 June 1889 in Henderson, Nebraska, married Abraham Voth,

8 children, lived for a while in Henderson, then Kremlin, Oklahoma

Died 29 March 1947 in Dallas, Oregon

**Gertruda** - born 8 December 1871 in Berdyansk

Baptized 17 May 1891 in Henderson, Nebraska

Married Klaas F Wiens 12 June 1897, 3 infant children died

Gertruda died 3 June 1901

Wife Katharina Berg died 10 September 1875 in Berdyansk

Heinrich Lohrenz then married **Katharina Wiebe** 12 February 1876

She was born 2 February 1851

Children:

**Justina** - born 15 November 1876 in Berdyansk

Baptized 2 June 1895 in Henderson, Nebraska

Married Jacob F Wiens 2 Mar 1897, 6 children, died 1955 in Henderson  
Sarah - born 20 February 1883 in Henderson, Nebraska, married Bernhard Franz Wiens  
4 children  
Ordained city missionaries 1910, foreign missionaries in 1916  
Bernhard died 1922 in China, Sarah died 1970

The family migrated from Berdyansk to Henderson, Nebraska on the *S S Switzerland*,  
departing from Antwerp, arriving in Philadelphia 24 June 1879

Heinrich died 6 April 1910 in Hampton, Nebraska, second wife Katharina died 28 May 1930  
in Dallas, Oregon

**Martens, Katharina (nee Esau)**

Married Johann Johann Martens (his second marriage)

They had 6 additional children

Johann died 29 August 1893 in Simferopol

Katharina died 13 December 1897 in Berdyansk, but was buried in Simferopol

**Martens, Mr**

Wife **Mrs Martens**

Daughter **Maria**, born 22 July 1898 in Berdyansk

Lived at Ukrainskaya 8 in Berdyansk in 1942

It is possible that Martens is actually her married name

**Mathis, Maria (Micka)**

Signed the letter of thanks for food packages written by Elder Leonhard Sudermann in late 1922

**Matthias, Ludwig**

**Katharina** (wife, then widow)

Sons:

**Hermann**

**Otto**

Established an agricultural machinery factory in 1884

Sometime before 1912 Ludwig died, and the factory was known as "Widow Matthias & Sons"

Likely the sons Hermann and Otto took over the management of the company

**Mierau, Jacob Jacob**

Born 9 May 1803 in South Russia

Father Jacob Peter Mierau

Married Helena Wiens, 2 children born in the Molotschna

Died 17 July 1879 in Berdyansk

**Neufeld, Abraham Abraham**

Born 15 March 1862 in Fuerstenau, Molotschna

Parents Abraham Neufeld and Maria Fast

His father recognized his talents and sent him to the Ohrloff *Zentralschule*

Having completed the 3-year course in 2 years he entered *Realschule* in Berdyansk, supporting  
himself by giving private lessons

After he was married he did journalistic work

Wife **Mrs Neufeld**

Children:

### **Vera**

#### **Eugene**

1883 took philological course at the University of Odessa  
Tended to study on his own; had an unusual capacity and love for work  
After 3 years in Odessa he spent 2 years at the University of Berlin  
For a number of years secondary school teacher in Berdyansk and Bachmut  
1890-1905 was principal of the Chortitza *Zentralschule*  
Entrusted with the supervision of the elementary and secondary school system in the Chortitza Colony  
Did some writing and lecturing, such as *Die Chortitza Zentralschule 1842-1892*, which was published in 1893  
Moved to Berdyansk to provide educational opportunities for his own children  
Founded *Realschule* in Berdyansk in 1905  
Died 9 January 1909 of a stroke

#### **Neufeld, Gerhard Isaak**

Born 29 September 1885 in Waldheim, Molotschna  
Married **Susanna Heinrichs** in 1912  
She was born 2 January 1892, daughter of Heinrich Heinrichs  
Children:

**Alice** - born 5 August 1914 in Waldheim, married Peter J Rempel 23 July 1938 in Kitchener, Ontario, 2 children, died 9 February 1970

**Areka** - born 16 September 1917 in Waldheim, married John P Goossen 31 July 1948 in Kitchener, Ontario, 4 children

**Arthur** - born 19 January 1920 in Berdyansk, married Frances Aileen Christensen 18 September 1948 in Toronto, Ontario, 2 children

The family left Waldheim sometime after 1917, likely as refugees, settling in Berdyansk

Gerhard died 28 September 1920, likely in Berdyansk

The remaining family likely immigrated to Canada in the 1920s, settling in Kitchener

Susanna died 13 February 1986 in Kitchener, Ontario

#### **Neufeld, Isaak Peter**

Born 9 January 1820 in Ohrloff, Molotschna  
Parents Peter Johann Neufeld and Susanna Pachma

Married **Gertruda Dueck** 24 July 1847

She was born 27 June 1828

Parents Gerhard Franz Dueck and Anna Dyck

Moved from Ohrloff to Berdyansk

Children:

**Anna** - born 15 October 1853

**Gertruda**

Isaak died April 1859 in Berdyansk

Wife Gertrude died 16 October 1899 in the Kuban Colony

#### **Neufeld, Jakob**

Invited guest to the wedding of Heinrich Peter Bahnmann and Katharina Wiens 11 January 1877

**Neufeld, Mr**

Wife **Neufeld, Mrs**

Daughter **Katharina** born 7 May 1881 in Berdyansk

Katharina died 27 March 1935

**Neufeld, Mr**

Wife **Neufeld, Mrs**

Daughter **Maria** - born 13 September 1882 in Berdyansk

Married Jacob Epp 20 November 1904 in Halbstadt, Molotschna

First lived in Lindenau, Molotschna, where Elisabeth and Anna were born

Moved to Kuruschan, Molotschna where Maria, Bernhard, Helena, Elsa and Jacob were born

Moved to Tiegerweide where Irma and Heinrich were born

Immigrated to Boissevain, Manitoba, where Margaretha was born

Jacob died 23 September 1961, Maria Died 16 April 1966, both in Boissevain

**Neufeld, Peter**

Invited guest to the wedding of Heinrich Peter Bahnmann and Katharina Wiens on

11 January 1877

**Neufeld, Peter** (presumably another Peter Neufeld)

Invited guest to the wedding of Heinrich Peter Bahnmann and Katharina Wiens on

11 January 1877

**Nickel, Isaac**

Born 11 August 1830 in Niedergruppe, Prussia

Parents Peter Nickel and Elisabeth Voth

Married **Maria Quiring** 9 October 1875

Children:

**Maria** - born 27 October 1877 in Berdyansk, migrated to Inman, Kansas, married Johann S Ediger 26 November 1895 in Inman, Kansas, Maria died 18 July 1938 in Dallas, Oregon

**Peter** - born 23 February 1879, baptized 16 June 1901 in Buhler, Kansas, married Sara Toews, died 2 April 1958 in Buhler, Kansas

**Hermann** - born 1880, baptized in Inman, Kansas

**Heinrich** - born 1882

**Margaretha** - born 14 February 1889 in Pastwa, Molotschna, baptized 21 June 1908 in Inman, Kansas, married William P Schierling, died 29 December 1950 in Inman, Kansas

The family therefore moved from Berdyansk to Pastwa after 1877 and before 1889, then

Migrated to the USA before 1901, most settled in Inman, Kansas

**Nikkel, Heinrich**

Born about 1823

Likely lived with his brother Peter Nikkel in Grossweide, Molotschna on Farm No 20

Moved from Grossweide to Berdyansk by 1852, worked as a miller's assistant

**Penner, Abraham**

Born 7 February 1849 in Schoenfeld, Bergthal Colony

Married Maria Buhler 4 June 1868

She was born 8 July 1847 in Berdyansk

Her parents were Jacob Buhler and Justina Klassen

The family first lived in Schoenfeld, then in Belo Sirko, then briefly in Berdyansk, where Justina was born, then immigrated to Mountain Lake, Minnesota between July 1873 and October 1875, where their last 6 children were born

Children:

Maria - born 9 April 1869 in Schoenfeld, died 8 July 1870 in Belo Sirko, Russia

**Peter** - born 2 April 1871 in Belo Sirko, Russia, immigrated to USA, married Elisabeth Dickmann, 2 children, wife died, married Martha Richert, Peter died 3 October 1949 in Newton, Kansas

**Justina (Kate)** - born 6 July 1873 in Berdyansk, immigrated to USA, married Heinrich H Klein, 12 children, Justina died April 1963 in Stillwater, Minnesota

Abraham - born 17 October 1875 in Mountain Lake, died later October 1875

Abraham - born 13 March 1877 in Mountain Lake

Maria - born 26 July 1879 in Mountain Lake, died 30 September 1880

Maria - born 12 August 1881 in Mountain Lake

Helena - born 10 December 1883 in Mountain Lake

Anna - born 18 June 1890 in Mountain Lake

Mother Maria died 4 April 1911 in Mountain Lake

Father Abraham died 6 November 1940 in Mountain Lake

### **Penner, Augustine**

Born 17 October 1826 in Danzig

Married Jakob Klassen 4 July 1843 in Rosenort, Molotschna

Had 7 children born in Elisabetthal, Molotschna 1844-1863

Last child Susanna was born 23 September 1869 in the Kuban Colony 23 September 1869

Susanna married Wilhelm Jacob Rempel 24 January 1889 in Berdyansk

(see separate entry for Wilhelm Jacob Rempel)

The Rempels had 16 children, the last 3 definitely born in Berdyansk 1907-1910

Mother Augustine Klassen (nee Penner) may have moved to Berdyansk with the Rempel children. She died in Berdyansk 5 April 1905

Some of the Klassen children and the Rempels immigrated to Ontario, Canada, likely in the 1920s

### **Penner, Helena Johann (nee Sudermann)**

Born 22 January 1806 in Goldschaar, West Prussia

Parents Abraham Sudermann and second wife Anna von Riesen

Seventh child of Abraham Sudermann

Married **Aron Penner**

Helena died 13 December 1871 in Berdyansk

No children recorded

### **Penner, Jakob**

Born about 1823

Wife **Maria** - born about 1825

Moved from Einlage, Chortitza Colony to Berdyansk in 1843

He was in business

Invited guests to the wedding of Heinrich Peter Bahnmann and Katharina Wiens on  
11 January 1877

### **Peters, Bernhard J**

Born 28 January 1861 in Mariawohl, Molotschna

Married **Margaretha Toews** 8 July 1884 in Schoenfeld

She was born 31 March 1867 in Ohrloff, Molotschna

Bernhard taught school, first in Berdyansk until 1892 or 1893, then moved to Schoenfeld

Children:

**Margaretha** - born 30 January 1886 in Berdyansk, married Julius Rempel 3 May 1908,  
3 children, Julius died 1 May 1919 in Russia, Margaretha died 16 June 1977  
in Chilliwack, BC

**Peter** - born 14 November 1887 in Berdyansk, died August 1904 in Schoenfeld

**Katharina** - born February 1890 in Berdyansk, married Nicholas A Rempel, lived in  
Marienthal, Molotschna, where 7 children were born, immigrated to Canada  
in 1925, another 5 children born in BC and Alberta

Gerhard - born 4 October 1895 in Schoenfeld, died in Alberta

Anna - born 13 November 1897, died in Ontario

Susanna - born 27 October 1899, died in Alberta

Maria - born 19 November 1901 in Schoenfeld, married David G Klassen

26 August 1922, 12 children, the first one born in the Chortitza Colony, the other  
11 in Alberta, Maria died 20 May 1994 in Linden, Alberta

Johann (Hans) - born 13 February 1906, died 1923 in Gnadenfeld, Molotschna

### **Peters, Hermann Heinrich**

Parents Heinrich H Peters and Maria Konracht

Married **Sarah Hiebert** 11 June 1882 in Berdyansk

She was born 8 January 1861 in Berdyansk, baptized 20 August 1879

Migrated to the USA, settling in Mountain Lake, Minnesota

9 children, likely all born in Mountain Lake

Hermann died 29 October 1921 in Mountain Lake

Sarah married again, Johann A Reimer 1 November 1936

Sarah died 8 April 1950 in Mountain Lake

### **Peters, Mr**

Wife **Mrs Peters**

Son **Wilhelm** - born 15 January 1892 in Berdyansk

Married Margaretha Warkentin, who was born 5 July 1895

They likely lived in Neu Schoensee, Sagradovka Colony

Daughter Margaretha was born 4 February 1920 in Neu Schoensee, Sagradovka,  
she married Valentin Peters, 2 children who were born in Didsbury,  
Alberta

### **Quiring, Johann**

Born 16 March 1816 in Grossweide, Molotschna

Married **Adelgrunde Claassen**

She was born about 1816

Children:

**Wilhelm** - born 1 October 1849 in Berdyansk

**Adelgrunde** - born 24 November 1851 in Berdyansk, baptized 1874 in Berdyansk,  
married Franz Voigt 6 May 1881, 4 children, Adelgrunde died 24 January 1914

**Johann** - born 24 November 1851, died 1 April 1852

**Johann** - born 2 August 1854 in Berdyansk, married Anna Buller 1880, 12 children of  
whom 6 died in childhood, Anna died 6 December 1930, Johann married  
Maria Dalham, Johann died 14 November 1944 in Goessel, Kansas

**Margaretha** - born 31 October 1856, died 28 March 1870

**Rosalie (Rosa)** - born 23 November 1860

Mother Adelgrunde died 24 October 1866, according to one record in Ohra, Danziger  
Niederung, West Prussia

The family immigrated to the USA aboard the *S S Frisia*, sailing from Hamburg and Le Havre  
arriving in New York 22 July 1874; they settled in Kansas

Father Johann died 1 January 1898 in Hillsboro, Kansas

**Quiring, Peter**

Born 16 December 1811 in Marienwerder, West Prussia

Married **Margaretha Peters** about 1835

She was born 8 March 1813

Probably moved to Berdyansk shortly after the marriage

Children:

**Peter** - born 4 April 1839 in Berdyansk, died June 1841 in Berdyansk

**Peter** - born 28 March 1842 in Berdyansk, died in 1843

Maria - born 11 November 1842 in Berdyansk, baptized in Berdyansk, married  
Isaac Nickel 9 October 1875 (see Isaac Nickel)

Invited guests to the wedding of Heinrich Peter Bahnmann and Katharina Wiens on  
11 January 1877

Margaretha died 16 April 1892, likely in Berdyansk

Peter died 16 December 1899, likely in Berdyansk

**Quiring, Wilhelm**

Born 6 November 1813 in Pietzckendorf, Prussia

Married Sara Sudermann (widow of Heinrich von Riesen) on 22 September 1853

She was born 5 October 1826 in Kalthof bei Koenigsberg, Prussia

Her parents were Abraham I Sudermann and Elisabeth Woelke

Children:

**Abraham** - born 8 July 1854 in Berdyansk, baptized 2 June 1873 in Berdyansk,  
immigrated to the USA in 1873, married Anna Dyck 17 January 1878,  
14 children, all born in Newton, Kansas, Abraham died 30 September 1899  
in Shelly, Oklahoma, Anna died 4 August 1915 in Newton, Kansas

**Maria** - born 23 August 1856 in Berdyansk, baptized 25 May 1874 in Berdyansk,  
immigrated to the USA, married Hermann Sudermann 21 January 1877 in



Summerfield, Illinois, 2 children, Hermann died 2 December 1915 in Newton, Kansas, Maria died 4 April 1917 also in Newton, Kansas

**Margaretha** - born about 1857

**Elisabeth** - born 15 December 1858 in Berdyansk, married Johann David Penner on 28 December 1882, Elisabeth died 19 April 1886 in Newton, Kansas

The family immigrated, probably directly from Berdyansk to the USA before 1878, settling in Newton, Kansas

Wilhelm died 23 September 1893 in Newton, Kansas

Sara died 4 December 1893, also in Newton, Kansas

### **Redekopp, Benjamin Benjamin**

Born 6 October 1904 in Petrovka, Orenburg, Russia

Married **Antonia Kusmenko** 14 June 1927 in Petrovka

Lived in Nikitovka in 1934, then Berdyansk in 1940, then to Mettman, Germany, by 1944

Children:

**Alexander** - born 20 July 1934 in Nikitovka, married Marlene Joan Rempel

**Laura** - born 26 September 1940 in Berdyansk, married Walter Unger, 3 children

Helena - born 14 August 1944 in Mettman, Germany, married Ernest Edward Pauls, 3 children

Irene - born 25 December 1945 in Mettman, Germany, married James David London

The whole family immigrated to St Catharines, Ontario after World War II

Benjamin died 16 February 1996

### **Redekopp, Peter B**

Born 30 August 1908 in Blitsnetze, South Russia

Married Katharina Ring in 1932 in Petrovka, Orenburg, Russia

She was born 8 July 1908 in Petrovka, Orenburg, Russia

Her parents were Johann and Marie Ring

Children:

**Benjamin** - born 22 April 1933 in Nikitovka, South Russia, married Delores Borisenko 10 May 1958 in Niagara-on-the-Lake, 3 children

**Erna** - born 4 July 1938 in Berdyansk, married Victor Jakob Dick 19 April 1958 in Virgil, Ontario, 5 children

Immigrated to Ontario after World War II

Peter died 31 December 1980

### **Regier, Katharina Nikolai (nee Wiens)**

Also Bahnmann and Dyck

Born 7 March 1859 in Berdyansk

Parents Nikolai Johann Wiens and Margaretha Janzen who lived and died in Berdyansk

Afflicted by severe eye condition (infection, possibly trachoma?) From the age of 7

Treated by Dr Renius in Melitopol 1867-68, then later in Kharkov and Odessa

Because of her eye condition she missed school, and was largely taught at home by her mother May to August of 1874, with her parents and sister Maria, went on an extensive trip to Austria, and Germany; eyes still "weak" so they saw an eye specialist in Germany

Mother Margaretha died 10 September 1874

Baptized by Elder Leonhard Sudermann in 1874

Married **Heinrich Peter Bahnmann** 11 January 1877; Peter was also from Berdyansk

The entire Mennonite population of Berdyansk was invited to the wedding, 60 households. Father Wiens wanted to make sure that no one was left out

The newly married couple lived in Rudnerweide, Molotschna for 3 years

Moved to Berdyansk in 1880, and lived there until 1892

Heinrich managed the estate of his brother, Peter Bahnmann for 2 years, then they moved to Schoenfeld

Autumn of 1903 migrated to the USA together with 7 children, because their son Nikolai was already studying there

Spent first winter in Mountain Lake, Minnesota

5 June 1904 arrived in Rosthern, Saskatchewan after a long hard journey

Established a farm between Waldheim and Laird

Husband Heinrich Bahnmann died 19 June 1906 in Waldheim

Katharina married Abraham Dyck 1 September 1912

Abraham was born 5 June 1848; he was the widowed father-in-law of her daughter Anna  
Abraham died 26 April 1914

Katharina married Elder Peter Regier 3 February 1916

Peter was born 14 January 1851 in Kalteherberge, West Prussia

He was the widowed father-in-law of Katharina's son Nikolai

The couple lived in his home in Tiefengrund, Saskatchewan

Peter died 11 April 1925

Katharina died 24 May 1936 in Laird, Saskatchewan

Children:

**Margaretha** - born 28 October 1877, likely in Rudnerweide, moved to Berdyansk with family in 1880, married Peter P Epp, 8 children, immigrated to Canada, died 21 September 1969 in Laird, Saskatchewan

**Nikolai** - born 12 February 1879, in Rudnerweide, moved to Berdyansk with family in 1880, studied for some years in North America, married Klara Regier 26 March 1908, 12 children, lived in Saskatchewan, California and Kansas, died 4 February 1945 in Vancouver BC

**Maria** - born 23 April 1880 in Berdyansk, died 22 January 1881 in Berdyansk

**Katharina** - born 18 October 1881 in Berdyansk, died 18 October 1881 in Berdyansk

**Maria** - born 21 April 1883 in Berdyansk, immigrated to Canada with parents in 1903, married Peter M Rempel 5 November 1905, 8 children, lived in Saskatchewan, died 6 April 1957 in Laird, Saskatchewan

**Anna** - born 4 October 1885 in Berdyansk, immigrated to Canada with her parents in 1903, married Peter A Dyck 25 July 1907, 3 children, lived in Waldheim, Saskatchewan, died 12 February 1912 in Waldheim

**Elisabeth** (Liese) - born 29 November 1887 in Berdyansk, died 28 October 1898, likely in Schoenfeld

**Henrietta** - born 29 May 1889 in Berdyansk, immigrated to Canada with parents in 1903, married Wilhelm W Rempel 2 November 1911, 4 children, lived in Hepburn

District, Saskatchewan, 4 children, died 9 December 1978

**Heinrich** - born 2 November 1891 in Berdyansk, immigrated to Canada with parents in 1903, drowned in North Saskatchewan River 26 July 1914

Katharina - born 26 July 1899 in Schoenfeld, immigrated to Canada with parents in 1903, died 18 January 1906 in Waldheim, Saskatchewan

Helena - born 20 January 1902 in Schoenfeld, died 9 April 1902 in Schoenfeld

**Reimer, Johann David**

Requested a food draft through the *Mennonitische Rundschau* 7 June 1922

Address: Puschkinskaya Street, No 11

Looking for Johann Goossen, formerly of Wintergruen Estate

**Rempel, Gustav Johann**

In 1922 lived in Berdyansk; requested food pages via the *Mennonitische Rundschau*, 31 May 1922

Address: Voronzovskaya Street, No 90

Looking for Wilhelm Peter Neufeld of Reedly, California

**Rempel, Isbrand Peter**

Born 27 August 1841 in Sparrau, Molotschna

Parents Peter Peter Rempel and Maria Wiens

He married **Susanna Wiens** 27 February 1866 in Berdyansk

She was born 22 November 1846 in Berdyansk

Her parents were Nikolai Johann Wiens and Margaretha Janzen

Children:

Nikolai - born 18 January 1867 in Berdyansk (see separate listing)

Wife Susanna died 25 April 1869 in Berdyansk

Isbrand married Anna Sudermann May 1870

She was born 20 December 1845 on an estate at Taschtschenak region

Her parents were Johann Sudermann and Katharina Schroeder

Not sure where the couple lived, but by 1888 lived in Melitopol

Children:

Katharina - born 22 May 1876, died in Winnipeg

Johann - born August 1878, probably never married, died 2 November 1938 in St Catharines, Ontario

Agnes - born 8 November 1880, married Wilhelm W Martens on 7 October 1933, she died 2 April 1962 in Niagara-on-the-Lake, Ontario

David - born 17 March 1883, married Katharina Enns 31 August 1913, David died 6 January 1920 in Tiege, Molotschna, of a brain tumour

Gertrude - born 21 September 1885, married Wilhelm J Martens 12 August 1909, 4 children, Wilhelm died 22 May 1922 in Melitopol, Gertrude immigrated to Drake, Saskatchewan in 1926, moved with daughter Anna to Niagara-on-the-Lake in 1941, died 1 August 1970 in Vineland, Ontario

Heinrich - born 16 January 1888 in Melitopol, married Elisabeth (Lisa) Enns, who was born 1 February 1903 in Berdyansk, immigrated to Saskatchewan, Heinrich died 15 March 1967 in Saskatoon, Saskatchewan, Lisa died June 1974 in

St Catharines, Ontario

**Rempel, Jacob**

Invited guest to the wedding of Heinrich Peter Bahnmann and Katharina Wiens on  
11 January 1877

**Rempel, Johann**

Born about 1797

Wife **Helena** - born about 1799

Children:

**Helena** - born about 1827

Johann - born about 1832 (see separate listing Johann Johann Rempel)

**Maria** - born about 1834

Lived in Sparrau, Molotschna Farm No 67, moved to Berdyansk by 1852

Owned a windmill by 1852

**Rempel, Johann**

Born 11 July 1831 in Ellerwald, West Prussia

Married **Maria Thiessen**

She was born 11 April 1835

Parents Klaas Thiessen and Maria Penner

Children:

**Helena** - born about 1854

**Maria** - born 9 December 1855 in Berdyansk , baptized 20 May 1874 in Berdyansk,  
married Peter Goossen 17 March 1878, he was born 10 March 1855 in  
Hierschau, Molotschna, immigrated to Marion County, Kansas

**Anna** - born 25 January 1861 in Berdyansk, married Johann A Siemens 8 June 1882  
in Buhler, Kansas, 7 children, died 9 May 1911 in Kansas City, Missouri

**Elisabeth** - born 14 February 1863 in Berdyansk, married Abraham Siemens on  
4 March 1886, 5 children, she died 21 April 1893 in Buhler, Kansas, Abraham  
died 25 September 1927 also in Buhler, Kansas

**Heinrich** - born 28 January 1865, married Elisabeth Willems 2 April 1888, 12 children,  
died 23 August 1941 in Corn, Oklahoma

**Agatha** - born about 1867

**Johann** - born 17 September 1871, married Helena Thiessen 7 November 1891 in  
Buhler, Kansas, 10 children, died 7 December 1944

**Katharina** - born about 1873

Aganetha - born 6 July 1874, likely in the USA, married Gerhard T Kroeker, 8 children  
all born in Buhler, Kansas, died June 1956

Family immigrated to USA aboard the *SS Holsatia*, leaving Hamburg and Le Havre, arriving  
in New York 1 July 1774. Probably settled in Kansas

Father Johann died 25 September 1889 in McPherson County, Kansas

Mother Maria died March 1916

**Rempel, Johann Johann**

Likely the son of Johann Rempel, the windmill owner

Wife **Mrs Rempel**

son **Johann** born in Berdyansk 1853. He lived there through his childhood and youth  
baptized and joined the church

The family migrated to Hillsboro, Kansas, in 1874

**Rempel, Johann Peter**

Born 25 February 1832 in Sparrau, Molotschna (some sources say Pordenau)

Parents Peter Peter Rempel and Maria Wiens

Lived with his father, Peter Peter Rempel, Sparrau, Molotschna until he moved to Berdyansk

Married **Elisabeth Huebert**, who was born 29 July 1830 in Margenau

Moved from Sparrau to Berdyansk by 1852

Worked as a miller in Berdyansk, likely in his father's windmill

Children:

**Peter** - born 21 August 1852 in Berdyansk, died later that year

**Johann** - born 23 January 1853 in Berdyansk

Immigrated to USA with parents in 1874

Married Elisabeth Heinrichs 16 May 1876, 3 children

Elisabeth died 24 May 1882

Married Margaretha Warkentin 13 August 1882, 1 child

Margaretha died 29 November 1883, likely complications of childbirth

Married Anna Bartel 28 February 1884, 3 children

Johann died 19 February 1903 in Marion County, Kansas

Anna died 24 December 1948 in Marion County, Kansas

**Margaretha** - born 4 February 1855 in Berdyansk, died 9 August 1855 in Berdyansk

**Jakob** - born 7 July 1856 in Berdyansk, immigrated to USA with parents in 1874

Married Augusta Ewert 30 May 1879, 11 children

Johann died 5 February 1917 in Marion County, Kansas

Augusta died 26 January 1935 in Marion County Kansas

**Maria** - born 14 December 1858 in Berdyansk, immigrated to USA with parents in 1874

Married John M Funk 3 December 1878, 11 children

John died 17 September 1919 in Hillsboro, Kansas

Maria died 22 March 1924 in Hillsboro, Kansas

**Peter** - born 12 March 1861 in Berdyansk, immigrated to USA with parents in 1874

Died 1 March 1926 in Bakersfield, California

**Elisabeth** - born 28 September 1863 in Berdyansk, died 9 November 1866 in Berdyansk

**Katharina** - born 29 October 1865 in Berdyansk, died 21 November 1866 in Berdyansk

**Isbrand** - born 5 October 1867 in Berdyansk, died 28 January 1873 in Berdyansk

**Nikolai** - born 7 May 1870 in Berdyansk, died 16 January 1873 in Berdyansk

**Elisabeth** - born 2 May 1874 in Berdyansk, immigrated to USA with parents in 1874

Married Gerhard W Funk 26 May 1892, 9 children

Elisabeth died 17 September 1944 in Hillsboro, Kansas

Gerhard died 29 April 1949 in Hillsboro, Kansas

The family immigrated, departing from Hamburg and Le Havre on the *S S Holsatia*, arriving  
in New York 1 July 1874

They then settled in Marion County, Kansas, likely Hillsboro

Wife Elisabeth Huebert died 24 September 1883

Johann Rempel married Elisabeth Ediger 13 November 1887 in Hillsboro, Kansas

Children:

Emil - born 24 December 1888 in Marion County, Kansas

Bertha

Johann died 29 March 1899 in Hillsboro, Kansas

### **Rempel, Mr**

Wife **Mrs Rempel**

Daughter **Justina** - born 14 May 1893 in Berdyansk, married Peter J Andres in 1919 in

Ebenfeld, Barnaul Colony, he died 19 May 1922, she married Peter Friesen who was

born in the Terek Colony, immigrated to Canada, adopted 2 sons, Justina died

9 November 1969 in Simcoe, Ontario, Peter died in 1970, also in Simcoe, Ontario

### **Rempel, Nikolai Isbrand**

(also listed in Melitopol)

Born 18 January 1867 in Berdyansk

Parents Isbrand Peter Rempel and Susanna Wiens

Married Katharina Johanna Martens 6 February 1892, likely on Estate Helena-Michailovka

She was born 25 November 1872 in Halbstadt, Molotschna

Her parents were Johann Johann Martens and Katharina Esau

Katharina inherited part of Estate Helena-Michailovka (300 dess), which was near Melitopol

Nikolai inherited some Nikolai Wiens money and a house near Kronsgarten Park

They first lived in Schoenwiese, lived in Berdyansk 1867 to 1883, then moved onto the estate by 1895

Nikolai also was involved in business, having some money and business partners in Danzig

Children:

Nikolai - born 3 February 1893 in Schoenwiese (see separate listing in Melitopol)

Olga

Gerhard - born 15 September 1895 on Estate Helena-Michailovka (see separate listing in Melitopol)

Vera - died young

Johann

Heinrich - born 14 September 1900 on Estate Helena-Michailovka (see separate listing in Melitopol)

Vera - born on Estate Helena-Michailovka

Sons Nikolai, Gerhard and Heinrich went to school in Melitopol, staying with a relative, Wilhelm Klassen

1917 Nikolai, wife Katharina and the 2 daughters were evicted from their estate, moved to Akimovka, south of Melitopol

1919 moved to Melitopol, staying with the Wilhelm Klassens (in a *Nebengebeude*)

1921 moved to Ohrloff, Molotschna; Nikolai managed the MCC kitchen in Ohrloff 1922-23

1924 family immigrated to Canada, likely first to Drake, Saskatchewan

Katharina died in Drake, Saskatchewan, 10 September 1928

Father Nikolai died 8 June 1941 in Niagara-on-the-Lake, Ontario

**Rempel, Peter**

Invited guest to the wedding of Heinrich Peter Bahnmann and Katharina Wiens on  
11 January 1877

**Rempel, Peter G**

Born 10 February 1866 in Nieder-Chortitza, Chortitza Colony

Baptized 21 May 1890 in Memrik Colony

Married **Agatha Heinrichs**, who was born 8 October 1867 in Kronsweide, Chortitza Colony

Her parents were Peter Kornelius Heinrichs and Anna Dyck

Lived in Nieder-Chortitza, certainly when the first 7 children were born

Not sure where they lived 1899 to 1907

By 1909 they lived in Berdyansk

After that they likely moved to Neuendorf, Chortitza Colony

Children:

**Peter** - born 8 July 1891 in Nieder-Chortitza

**Aganetha** - born 1 August 1892 in Nieder-Chortitza

Agatha - born 14 July 1893 in Nieder-Chortitza, died 1 March 1905

Anna - born 14 July 1894 in Nieder-Chortitza, died 15 July 1895 in Nieder-Chortitza

Maria - born 11 January 1896 in Nieder-Chortitza, died 11 July 1898 in  
Nieder-Chortitza

Johann - born 7 April 1897 in Nieder-Chortitza, died 10 February 1898 in  
Nieder-Chortitza

**Heinrich** - born 29 March 1898 in Nieder-Chortitza

**Johann** - born 31 May 1899

Helena - born 20 July 1900, died 23 September 1902

**Gerhard** - born 21 May 1903

**Hilda** - born 18 December 1904

Waldemar - born 22 December 1905, died 1 July 1906

**Amalia** - born 25 May 1907, baptized 13 June 1927 in Neuendorf, Chortitza,  
migrated to Canada

**Erna** - born 3 August 1909 in Berdyansk, died 9 August 1909 in Berdyansk

Father Peter died in 1917

Mother Agatha died 1 February 1920 in Neuendorf, Chortitza

**Rempel, Peter Peter**

Born about 1803 in Marienburg, West Prussia

Married **Maria Wiens**, who was born about 1803

Migrated from Einlage, Elbing, West Prussia in 1828

Likely settled in Sparrau, Molotschna, Farm No 16 or 18

Moved to Berdyansk by 1852, owned a mill by then

Children:

**Peter** - born about February 1828 in Sparrau, Molotschna, married Anna Huebert,  
then Margaretha Pankratz, moved to Jezsk on the Sea of Azov, lived in the  
Kuban in the 1880s

Johann - born 25 February 1832 (see separate listing Johann Peter Rempel)



**Anna** - married **Franz Willms**

They lived in Berdyansk

Anna raised her nephew Wilhelm Jakob Rempel

The Franz Willms were invited guests to the wedding of Heinrich Peter Bahnmann  
and Katharina Wiens on 11 January 1877

**Maria** - born about 1833 in Sparrau, married **Cornelius Friesen**, was widowed and  
bedridden for the last 20 years of her life

They lived in Berdyansk

**Katharina** - born about 1838 in Sparrau

**Isbrand** - born 27 August 1841 in Sparrau, married Susanna Wiens 27 February 1866  
in Berdyansk, she was born 22 November 1846 in Berdyansk, she died  
25 April 1869, he then married **Anna Sudermann** May 1870, she was born  
20 December 1845 on a Taschtschenak estate, they lived in Berdyansk, but  
Isbrand died 26 December 1891 in the Taschtschenak region

Son: Nikolai Isbrand - born 18 January 1867 in Berdyansk (see separate listing)

**Jakob** - born about 1844 in Sparrau, Molotschna, married, lived at least by 1866 in  
Elisabetthal, Molotschna

Children:

Jakob

Anna

Katharina

Maria

Helena

Margaretha

Wilhelm - born 11 December 1866 in Elisabetthal

(see separate listing Wilhelm Jakob Rempel)

Wife Maria died sometime after 1852

Peter married **Elisabeth Wiens** about 1860

Peter died 1885 in Berdyansk

**Rempel, Wilhelm Jakob**

Born 11 December 1866 in Elisabetthal, Molotschna

Father Jakob Rempel

Married **Susanna Klassen** 24 January 1889 in Berdyansk

They probably lived in Berdyansk, certainly by 1907

Children:

**Jakob** - twin, died early

**Augusta** - twin, died early

**Wilhelm** - died as an infant

**Wilhelm** - born 8 March 1892, disappeared in 1918

**Augusta** - born 14 May 1893, married Peter Andres, then married Peter Friesen,  
died 10 November 1969 in Port Rowan, Ontario

**Anna** - born 11 January 1895, married Heinrich Schultz, died 4 November 1923  
in Lichtfelde, Molotschna

**Jakob** - born 4 March 1896, married Agatha Enns, died 26 October 1961  
**Olga** - born 1 January 1898, married Franz F Janzen, died 16 September 1972  
 in Port Rowan, Ontario  
**Johann** - born 18 February 1899, married Katharina Kurtz, died 11 November 1945  
 in Niagara-on-the-Lake  
**Susanna** - born 16 February 1901, married Ezra D Grove, died 26 May 1984 in  
 Hanover, Ontario  
**Heinrich** - born 18 May 1902, married Anna Enns, died 24 October 1959  
**Mathilde** - born 25 February 1904, married Jacob M Friesen  
**Katharina** - born 1 May 1905, married Peter J Smith, then Walter Dymond, died  
 5 November 1986 in Stouffville, Ontario  
**Maria** - born 16 April 1907 in Berdyansk, married Heinrich Franz Janzen, died  
 7 July 1996 in Niagara-on-the-Lake, Ontario  
**Cornelius** - born 1 June 1909, married Anna Martens  
**Margaretha** - born 14 September 1910 in Berdyansk, married Wilhelm Hamm, died  
 20 May 1999 of cancer in Port Rowan, Ontario

Wilhelm represented the Berdyansk Mennonites at a meeting at a meeting regarding the  
*Forstei* held 5-6 May 1909 and 1910

The family migrated to Ontario, Canada, likely in the 1920s

Susanna died 5 January 1942 in Reesor, Ontario

Wilhelm died 7 May 1946 in Port Rowan, Ontario

#### **Riediger, Martin A**

Born 8 January 1820 in Lichtfelde, Molotschna

Married **Elisabeth Heese** 9 April 1844

She was born 11 December 1819

Parents Heinrich Heese and Katharina Penner

Martin was sent by Johann Cornies for further study

The became teacher in Ohrloff until 1846

Must have lived in Berdyansk sometime around 1848

Moved to Grunau in the Mariupol Colony where he was a bookkeeper

Much of the family still related to Berdyansk

Children:

**Heinrich** - born 18 May 1845 in Ohrloff, married Helena Thiessen, 11 children, died  
 7 November 1909 in Yazykovo Colony

**Anna** - born 9 October 1846 in Ohrloff, married Jakob Thiessen, 10 children, lived in  
 Ekaterinoslav

**Abram** - born 23 August 1848 in Berdyansk, died 18 December 1851

Jacob - born 3 February 1851 in Grunau, died 18 December 1851

Katharina - born 8 December 1851, married Johannes Sudermann, 4 children

**Elisabeth** - born 1 October 1853 in Grunau, married **Cornelius Janzen**  
 28 September 1872 in Gulai, Poland

Cornelius was born 21 November 1848 in Schoenwiese

Family likely lived in Berdyansk

Children:

**Elisabeth** - born 6 August 1873, married Isaak Thiessen, she died  
1927 in Berdyansk

**Heinrich** - born 14 January 1875

**Abram** - born 23 September 1876

**Maria** - born 1 February 1878

**Cornelius** - born 8 May 1880

**Katharina** - born 15 October 1881, died 1920

**Anna** - born 2 May 1883, died 1963

**Eva** - born 3 July 1885, died 1949

**Peter** - born 2 February 1887

**Johann** - born 23 June 1889

**Wilhelm** - born 13 February 1891, died 1919

**Helena** - born 26 June 1893

**Agatha** - born 22 March 1896, married Johann Klassen 10 June 1923 in  
Arkadark Colony, Russia, immigrated to Canada, Johann founded  
Monarch Industries of Winnipeg, and was involved in founding  
Bethania Nursing Home

Peter - born 16 January 1856 in Grunau

(see separate listing)

Maria - born 1 July 1858 in Neuanlage, Barzenkovo Colony

Married Wilhelm Isaak Dyck

(see biography of Wilhelm Isaak Dyck of Millerovo)

Martin died 21 April 1866 in Neu Stuttgart, Russia

Mother Elisabeth died 15 December 1902

**Riediger, Peter Martin**

Born 16 January 1856 in Grunau

Parents Martin A Riediger and Elisabeth Heese

In 1866 at the death of his father, was taken in by his uncle, Heinrich Heese

Educated at Chortitza *Zentralschule*, then *Gymnasium* in Ekaterinoslav, 2 years Teachers

College in Halbstadt, Prussia

Was a teacher in the Chortitza *Zentralschule* 1879-1892

Purchased the rope factory in Berdyansk owned by Wiens and Janzen

Around 1897 lived in Berdyansk, then moved to Korneyevka Estate at least 1903-1907,

then probably back to Berdyansk, certainly by 1912, staying there until he died in 1916

Married Justina Wiebe 5 August 1879, she was born 9 January 1861

Children:

Peter - born 26 March 1880, died 30 March 1880

Peter - born 3 March 1881, died 11 March 1881

**Justina** - born 1 December 1882 in Chortitza

Wife Justina died 27 March 1883

Married **Susanna Heinrichs** 22 July 1884

Children:

Susanna - born 13 June 1885, died 3 June 1886

Julius - born 15 March 1887, died 20 January 1890 of diphtheria

**Aganetha Janzen** adopted 22 November 1888

She was born 28 July 1880

Elisabeth - born 6 February 1889, died 5 February 1890

Aganetha - born 20 December 1890, married Leonhard Leonhard Sudermann ,  
14 February 1918, died 1951 in Russia

**Peter** - born 14 February 1893, married Helena Bergmann, died January 1919 in  
South Russia, murdered

**Susanna** - born 31 January 1895

Elisabeth - born 13 March 1897 in Berdyansk, married Johann Gerhard Klassen  
27 November 1916 in Berdyansk, Elisabeth died 23 December 1963  
(see separate listing Johann Gerhard Klassen)

**Katharina** - born 2 May 1899, married Heinrich H Reimer 9 May 1921, she was teacher,  
died 2 September 1970 in Pleshanovo, Neu Samara, Russia

**Susanna** - born 15 February 1901, married Helmut Guertler 3 October 1938 in Berlin,  
Germany

**Helena** - born 10 April 1903 on Korneyevka Estate, married Isaac T Ewert, died  
11 July 1998 in Waterloo, Ontario

**Heinrich** - born 7 November 1905 on Korneyevka Estate, married Susanna Unruh, died  
19 November 1971 in Kitchener, Ontario

**Julius** - born 12 December 1907 on Korneyevka Estate, married Sara Boldt, lived  
in Kitchener

Minister P Riediger from Berdyansk was listed as a correspondent for *Friedensstimme* in  
December, 1912

Was minister in charge of some of the Sunday church services in 1913

He was also one of a group of teachers who were involved in the writing of German grammar  
books, readers, Bible story books, Bible and Church history book

Peter died 10 October 1916 in Berdyansk

It is probably Peter's widow who purchased the house of Heinrich Abram Ediger, likely  
about 1918. She lived there with her 2 daughters, Susanna and Katharina, and took in  
students as boarders. The Edigers still lived in one of the wings of the house

Second wife Susanna Heinrichs died 3 October 1927 in Kitchener, Ontario

### **Riesen, (von Riesen), Anna**

Born 14 January 1829 in Schidlitz, West Prussia

Parents Peter von Riesen and Margaretha Harder

Younger sister of Helena Janzen

Never married

Lived with Cornelius and Helena Janzen when they were first married in Schidlitz,  
then moved with them to Berdyansk, immigrated to Canada with them in 1873, then  
to USA in 1874.

Throughout her life with the Janzens shared equally in all of the household expenses

Was in the Janzen household for almost 50 years

Died 28 June 1898 in Beatrice, Nebraska

**Riesen, (von Riesen), Anna**

Born 26 March 1852 in Schidlitz, West Prussia

Parents Abraham von Riesen and Johanna Hamm

Following the death of her parents was educated partly in the home of Cornelius Janzen,  
partly by relatives in Prussia

Taken into the home of her uncle, Johann Hamm

Migrated to USA with her brothers

Married Heinrich G Warkentin July 1911

**Riesen, (von Riesen) Heinrich**

Born 5 May 1821 in Schidlitz, West Prussia

Parents Peter von Riesen and Maria Tiessen

Helena Janzen (husband Cornelius) was his younger sister

Married **Sara Sudermann** about 1840

She was born 5 October 1826 in Kalthof bei Koenigsberg, Prussia

Her parents Abraham I Sudermann and Elisabeth Woelke

Lived in Berdyansk

The Cornelius Janzen family lived with them the early part of 1852 during the time that their  
house was being built

Heinrich died 27 August 1852

Wife Sara married Wilhelm Quiring 22 September 1853

**Riesen (von Riesen), Heinrich**

Born about 1852, likely in Schidlitz, West Prussia

Parents Abraham von Riesen and Johanna Hamm

Following the death of his parents was educated partly in the home of Cornelius Janzen,  
partly by relatives in Prussia

**Riesen, (von Riesen) Isbrand**

Born 18 June 1791 in Marienburg, West Prussia

Married **Helena Harder** 24 April 1814 in Heubuden, West Prussia

She was born 20 February 1795 in Marienburg

Her parents were Claas Harder and Helena Sudermann

Initially they lived in Elbing area, West Prussia, where all their 8 children were born

Children:

Anna - born 1 July 1815

Heinrich Eduard - born 10 May 1818

Helena Wilhelmina - born 20 October 1819

Rudolf Hermann - born 13 February 1821 (see separate listing)

Listed in family history as having moved to Berdyansk in 1847

**Katharina Henrietta** - born 5 November 1822

**Johann Friedrich** - born 21 August 1824

**Maria Emilie** - born 30 October 1825

**Johanna** - born 21 June 1829

The parents migrated to Berdyansk, perhaps as early as 1832, definitely by 1847

Likely at least the 5 younger children went with them  
Isbrand died 3 December 1832, said to have been in Berdyansk  
The wife was a frequent guest in the Cornelius Janzen home, and for a time lived with them  
Helena died 15 July 1869 in Berdyansk

**Riesen, (von Riesen), Johannes**

Born 25 March 1823 in Schidlitz, West Prussia  
Parents Peter von Riesen and Margaretha Harder  
Younger brother of Helena Janzen  
Accompanied the Janzens when they moved to Berdyansk in 1850  
Bought a farm from brother-in-law Cornelius Janzen in Wickerau, near Elbing, West Prussia  
in early 1856

**Married Marie Wiebe**

Born 25 December 1832 in Rothebude, Prussia  
Parents were Jacob Wiebe and Anna Penner

**Children:**

**Johannes** - born 29 June 1857 in Prussia, immigrated to USA, married Marie Wiebe  
died 23 September 1887 in Beatrice, Nebraska

**Anna** - born 1 February 1860 in Berdyansk, immigrated to USA, married Heinrich  
Wiens, died 7 April 1918 in Beatrice, Nebraska

**Helena** - born 24 August 1861 in Berdyansk, died 8 January 1940

Margaretha - born 1864 in Wickerau

Cornelius - born 21 May 1870 in Wickerau, immigrated to USA, married Katharina  
Penner of Beatrice, Nebraska, died 4 February 1942 in California

The family first lived in Wickerau, then moved to Berdyansk by 1860, then back to Wickerau  
by 1864

Immigrated to USA on the *S S Nederland* departing from Antwerp, arriving in New York  
22 August 1876

Settled in Beatrice, Nebraska

Johannes died 26 January 1897 in Beatrice, Nebraska; wife Marie died 29 March 1909,  
presumably in Beatrice

**Riesen, (von Riesen) Rudolf Hermann**

Born 13 February 1821 in Elbing, West Prussia

Parents Isbrand von Riesen and Helena Harder

Listed as being baptized in Danzig in 1839

Moved to Berdyansk in 1847

Married **Katharina Friesen** 14 April 1849 in Berdyansk

She was born 24 March 1828 in Altona, Molotschna

Rudolf retained his Prussian citizenship

Cabinet maker

Children: the family records cannot be accurate in all cases, so some data has been "corrected"

**Rudolf** - born 25 December 1854 in Berdyansk, baptized 7 April 1873 in Berdyansk,  
immigrated to USA with parents in 1873, married Sara Richert 27 February 1879 in  
Alexanderwohl, Kansas, died 2 September 1934 in Arlington, Kansas

**Gertrude** - born 6 May 1857 in Berdyansk, immigrated to USA with parents in 1873, married Cornelius A Bergmann 10 February 1881, died 9 March 1886

**Heinrich** - born 30 January 1860 in Berdyansk, immigrated to USA with parents in 1873, baptized 2 June 1879 in Bruderthal, Kansas, married Katharina Funk 27 September 1889

**Katharina** - born 23 August 1869 in Berdyansk, immigrated to USA with parents in 1873, married Paul Mouttet 7 November 1890, died 21 February 1936 in Hillsboro, Kansas

**Agatha** - born 23 December 1866 in Berdyansk, immigrated to USA with parents in 1873, married Wilhelm J Nickel 17 December 1891, died 28 May 1952 in Hillsboro, Kansas

**Agnes** - born about 1869 in Berdyansk, immigrated to USA with parents in 1873

**Johann** - born 7 February 1872 in Berdyansk, twin with Friedrich, immigrated to USA with parents in 1873

**Friedrich** - born 7 February 1872 in Berdyansk, twin with Johann, immigrated to USA with parents in 1873, married Elisabeth Nickel 18 March 1897, Elisabeth died, then married Katharina Dyck 30 October 1912, he died 29 January 1961 in Hillsboro, Kansas

Jacob - born 3 February 1876 in Marion County, Kansas, moved to West Reserve, Manitoba, then to Saskatchewan, married Elisabeth Esau 1 July 1902 in Reinland, Manitoba

Family left Berdyansk departing from Hamburg and Le Havre on the *S S Frisia* and landing in New York 29 May 1873

Settled in Hillsboro, Kansas

Rudolf died 26 December 1891 and wife Katharina died 30 December 1891, both in Hillsboro, Kansas

#### **Schmidt, Abram**

Wife **Mrs Schmidt**

Abram died before 1877

Widow Abram Schmidt was an invited guest to the wedding of Heinrich Peter Bahnmann and Katharina Wiens on 11 January 1877

#### **Schroeder, David**

Probably born on an estate

Son of a Schroeder, possibly Heinrich, mother a Reimer

Had brothers Heinrich and Peter, at least 5 sisters, one of which was Katharina Janzen, wife of the mayor of Orechov

Nephew of Jacob Reimer, who turned 73 in 1900

Invited guest to the wedding of Heinrich Peter Bahnmann and Katharina Wiens on 11 January 1877

#### **Schroeder, Margaretha**

Wrote a letter to her aunt in Canada, Katharina Regier of Laird Saskatchewan, in April of 1922 describing the terrible famine in Berdyansk. The aunt responded by sending a food draft.



A later letter reported that Margaretha's brother Nikolai of Berdyansk had died of starvation Emigrated from Berdyansk to Canada in 1926, landing in Quebec 15 October 1926. She then settled in Laird, Saskatchewan

**Schroeder, Nikolai**

Brother of Margaretha Schroeder, reported as having died of starvation in Berdyansk, likely in April or early May 1922

**Schroeder, Peter David**

Wife **Margaretha (Grete)**

Requested food draft via *Mennonitische Rundschau* 7 June 1922

Address: Buschkinskaya Street No 4

Looking for Minister Nikolai Bahnmann, Laird, Saskatchewan

Signed the letter of thanks for food packages written by Elder Leonhard Sudermann in late 1922

In 1923 received a gift of \$15 from Peter and Katharina Regier of Laird, Saskatchewan, to help them in their need

**Spent, H**

Invited guest to the wedding of Heinrich Peter Bahnmann and Katharina Wiens on 11 January 1877

**Sudermann, Abraham Isaak**

Born 29 July 1790 in Kalthof bei Koenigsberg, Prussia

Parents Isaak Sudermann and Magdalena Tiessen

Married **Elisabeth Woelke** 16 April 1816

She was born 17 June 1793 in Kalthof bei Koenigsberg, Prussia

Abraham was originally a miller by trade

He was a minister in the Heubuden Mennonite Church in 1823, but had to step down from this position in 1836 because of an eye disease

Migrated to Russia in 1840, settling in Berdyansk

Children:

Infant - born 6 April 1817 in Koldowe, Prussia, died 6 April 1817 in Koldowe

Abraham - born 10 June 1818 in Koldowe, Prussia, died 1 January 1820 in Koldowe

Elisabeth - born 3 January 1820 in Kalthof bei Koenigsberg, married Herrmann

Sudermann, son of Abraham Sudermann and Anna von Riesen

(see listing of Herrmann Abraham Sudermann)

**Maria** - born 4 February 1821 in Kalthof bei Koenigsberg, married Leonhard Abraham Sudermann 23 October 1842

(see biography of Elder Leonhard Abraham Sudermann)

Sara - born 11 August 1822 in Kalthof bei Koenigsberg, died 1822

**Anna** - born 8 September 1823 in Kalthof bei Koenigsberg, migrated to Russia with her parents, settled in Berdyansk by 1841

Abraham - born 16 October 1824 in Kalthof bei Koenigsberg, migrated from the Kleinwerder in West Prussia to the Molotschna in 1839, in a group of 35, under the leadership of Johann Goertz, settled in Halbstadt

Hermann - born 21 September 1825 in Kalthof bei Koenigsberg, married Elisabeth Ediger 24 April 1862

(see separate listing Hermann Woelke Sudermann)

Sara - born 5 October 1826 in Kalthof bei Koenigsberg, married Heinrich von Riesen about 1840 in Prussia, his parents were Peter von Riesen and Margaretha Harder, Heinrich died 27 August 1852 in Berdyansk, Sara then married Wilhelm Quiring, she died 4 December 1893 in Newton, Kansas

**Jakob** - born 23 October 1827 in Kalthof bei Koenigsberg, migrated from the Kleinwerder in West Prussia to the Molotschna in 1839, in a group of 35, under the leadership of Johann Goertz, probably remained single, and died of smallpox, probably died in Berdyansk

Bernhard - born 30 January 1829, died the same day

Bernhard - born 17 April 1830, died 4 October 1830

Bernhard - born 14 January 1832

Franz - born 29 March 1833, died the same day

Helene - born 14 July 1834, died the same day

Heinrich - born 20 December 1835, died the same day

By 1845 he had built and operated a treadmill in Berdyansk

Also was a wine merchant

Abraham organized the first Mennonite worship services in Berdyansk, for the first number of years they met in homes

When the congregation became organized, Abraham was the first elder

Continued on as elder until poor health forced him to resign; son-in-law Leonhard Sudermann was the elected elder in 1865

Abraham died later that year, in 1865

#### **Sudermann, Abraham Jakob**

Wife **Mrs Sudermann**

Requested food draft via *Mennonitische Rundschau* 7 June 1922

Voronzovskaya Street No 53

Looking for Peter Jansen, Beatrice, Nebraska

Signed the letter of thanks for food packages written by Elder Leonhard Sudermann in late 1922

Quite probably the same Abraham Sudermann whose house was totally destroyed during the Civil War. David M Hofer published picture of the ruins in his book in 1924

#### **Sudermann, Heinrich Jakob**

Born 1857, probably in Berdyansk

Parents Jacob Isaak Sudermann and Eva Unruh

Married **Maria Klassen** 31 May 1879

She was born 16 January 1857 Neuteich Estate

Parents Abraham A Klassen and Maria D Schroeder

Was owner of Estate Selenoye, near the Memrik Colony

Children:

Jakob - died on Estate Selenoye

**Heinrich** - born 23 March \_\_\_\_\_, married Helena Mueller, 2 daughters, Martha, Maria, Heinrich died in Berdyansk in 1920 (see separate listing for Helena)

**Abraham** - born 14 September \_\_\_\_\_, married Maria Wiens 25 May 1908, she was

born 3 February 1887, 3 children, Maria, Helena, Nikolai, Abraham died in Berdyansk in 1920

Eva - born 26 April 1893, died 20 September 1917

Mother Maria Sudermann died 26 March 1917

Heinrich J Sudermann was attacked and killed by bandits at the Railway Station Chaplino 18 October 1919; they got away with his belongings

#### **Sudermann, Helena (nee Mueller)**

Originally from Helenendorf, Caucasus

Helena Mueller married Heinrich Sudermann

Children:

**Martha**

**Maria**

Husband Heinrich died in Berdyansk in 1920

In 1922 requested food packages via the *Mennonitische Rundschau*, 31 May 1922

Address: Voronzovskaya Street, No 79

Looking for Johannes Mueller, formerly from Switzerland

#### **Sudermann, Hermann**

One of the 4 young men who accompanied Johann Claassen to St Petersburg and Reval in 1854 when Claassen was trying to solve the legal problems of the *Bruderschule* in Gnadenfeld

Sudermann stayed in Reval for some additional training

He then taught in the *Bruderschule* in Gnadenfeld, Molotschna

He was a quiet and diffident man, was forced out of the school

Lived as a private citizen in Berdyansk

Family migrated to the USA in 1874

#### **Sudermann, Herrmann Abraham**

Born 28 January 1814 in Goldschaar, West Prussia

Parents Abraham Sudermann and second wife Anna von Riesen

Eleventh child of Abraham Sudermann

Married **Elisabeth Sudermann** 26 December 1837 in Germany

She was born 3 January 1820 in Kalthof, near Koenigsberg, East Prussia

Parents Abraham I Sudermann and Elisabeth Woelke

Children:

Elisabeth - born 15 October 1838 in Kalthof, East Prussia, died at an early age

**Elisabeth** - born 3 May 1840, married Johann Jantzen in 1860, died 15 November 1860, one record says in Berdyansk

One daughter Elise - born 10 November 1860 in Orechov, Savitaya, Amur Region (see separate entry Elise Jantzen)

Migrated to Berdyansk by 1842

**Abraham** - born 26 November 1842 in Berdyansk

Wife Elisabeth died 31 December 1842 likely in Berdyansk

Married **Maria Rempel** 20 February 1847

**Hermann** - born 22 September 1849 in Berdyansk, married Maria Quiring

21 January 1877 in Summerfield, Illinois, USA, she was born 23 August 1856 in Berdyansk, Hermann died 4 April 1917 in Newton, Kansas

**Heinrich** - born 13 March 1853

**Maria** - born 19 September 1854

**Abram** - born 9 September 1856

**Anna** - born 10 May 1858, baptized in Berdyansk 17 May 1875, married Rudolph Claassen 5 September 1878 in Newton Kansas

Wife Maria died 28 December 1860

Herrmann married Anna Thiessen 24 June 1861

She was born about 1833

Quite possibly moved from Berdyansk to Goldschaar by the Konkaya River at this time

Elisabeth - born 14 April 1862, died 28 April 1862

Jakob - born 4 April 1863, said to be in Goldschaar by the Konkaya River, South Russia, immigrated to the USA

Agatha - born 8 January 1864 at Goldschaar by the Konkaya River, immigrated to the USA

Leonhard - born 20 March 1867

The extended family immigrated to the USA; departed Bremen, Germany, arriving in New York 26 August 1876

Those immigrating were Herrmann, third wife Anna, children Maria, Anna, Jakob and Agatha, as well as son Hermann and his wife Maria (nee Quiring)

#### **Sudermann, Hermann Woelke**

Born 21 September 1825 in Kolthof bei Koenigsberg

Baptized 2 May 1845 in Gnadenfeld

Married **Elisabeth Ediger** 24 April 1862

She was born 21 January 1839 in Schoensee, Molotschna, baptized 1856 in Rudnerweide  
Children:

**Abraham** - born 24 January 1863 in Tokmak, baptized in Berdyansk, died 23 August 1891 in El Reno Oklahoma

Elisabeth - born 7 June 1864 in Gnadenfeld, died 5 December 1865 in Gnadenfeld

Elisabeth - born 6 March 1866 in Gnadenfeld, died 31 July 1867 in Gnadenfeld

**Maria** - born 30 November 1867 in Gnadenfeld, married Wilhelm Bartel 17 March 1894, 5 children, died 9 May 1914 in Aberdeen, Idaho

**Anna** - born 9 October 1869 in Gnadenfeld, married Peter P Janzen 8 October 1899, 5 children, died 10 April 1954 in Newton, Kansas

**Sara** - born 21 July 1871 in Berdyansk, baptized 20 May 1898 in Newton, Kansas, married Johann H Warkentin 11 November 1900, 4 children, died 30 October 1934 in Geary, Oklahoma

**Hermann E** - born 3 May 1873 in Berdyansk, baptized 25 May 1890 in Newton, Kansas, married Mary Katherine Krehbil 27 December 1898, 5 children, died 12 August 1967 in Newton, Kansas

**Peter** - born 24 September 1874 in Berdyansk, died 17 December 1879 in Berdyansk

**Jakob** - born 31 August 1877 in Berdyansk, died 20 December 1879 in Berdyansk

**Salomon (Sam)** - born 12 September 1879 in Berdyansk, married Augusta Lancer,  
died 3 December 1955 in New York, New York

The family originally lived in Tokmak until 1863, then lived in Gnadenfeld 1864-about 1870,  
then lived in Berdyansk, likely until their migration to the USA in 1885

Possibly invited guests to the wedding of Heinrich Peter Bahnmann and Katharina Wiens on  
11 January 1877

Immigrated to the USA aboard the *S S Nuernberg* departing from Bremen, arriving in New York  
26 May 1885 with 6 children.

Settled in Newton, Kansas

Elisabeth died 12 January 1898, Hermann died 24 February 1899, both in Newton, Kansas

### **Sudermann, Jakob Isaak**

Born 11 August 1794 in Frauenfeld bei Elbing, West Prussia

Married **Eva Unruh** on 21 September 1841 likely in Berdyansk

She was born 21 September 1821 in Elbing, West Prussia

Parents Heinrich Unruh and Maria Ratzlaff

She may in time have been a foster daughter living at the Peter Schmidts on the  
Steinbach Estate

Apparently Jakob was well educated and with a large library

Originally lived in Gnadenfeld, Molotschna, Farm No 55

Owned a windmill in Berdyansk by 1852

Was a grain broker, miller, wine merchant, estate owner and minister

Children:

(In this family only the names of the parents are certain, different records of the children varying considerably)

**Jakob** - born after 1841 in Berdyansk , possibly invited guest to the wedding of Heinrich  
Peter Bahnmann and Katharina Wiens on 11 January 1877

Leonhard - born about 1843 in Berdyansk according to one record, another has him born  
in 1859 (see separate listing for Leonard Jakob Sudermann)

Helene - born 21 September 1843 in Berdyansk , married Gerhard Voth  
(see entry for Gerhard Voth)

**Isaak** - born 1 December 1845 in Berdyansk

Married **Anna Dick** 10 January 1867

She was born 14 November 1847 on an Rosenhof (Brodsky) Estate

Parents Jakob Dick and Anna Schmidt

Invited guests to the wedding of Heinrich Peter Bahnmann and Katharina Wiens on  
11 January 1877

Children:

**Jakob** - born 4 September 1867 in Berdyansk, married **Amy Evelyn**

**Greaves** on 16 April 1900, she was born 14 January 1878 in  
Sheffield, England, the niece of factory owner John Greaves,

Jacob was travelling salesman for the "Swallow Brand" of farm  
implements, Jacob died 12 March 1909 in Berdyansk, Amy married  
again, died 2 November 1975 in Newton, Kansas

**Anna** - born 27 October 1868, died 20 March 1872 Rosenhof Estate

**Maria** - born 22 September 1870 in Berdyansk, married **Sergei Tcheretz**  
12 April 1895, he was born 20 December 1865

Children:

**Anna** - born 29 August 1896

**Lydia** - born 23 August 1898

**Alexander** - born 19 May 1902

**Valerian** - born 3 November 1903, died 14 March 1910

**Victor** - born 11 August 1909

**Georg** - born 6 September 1911

Maria signed letter of thanks for food packages written by Elder  
Leonhard Sudermann in late 1922

Sergei died 1927 in Berdyansk

**Peter** - born 21 January 1874

Married **Emilie Victoria Greaves** on 8 September 1899

Her nickname was "Mimi"

She was born 25 December 1878 in Sheffield, England, the  
daughter of factory owner John Greaves

Peter was one of the managers in the Greaves factory, he died  
December 1920 in Kerch, Crimea, arrested as a hostage, and  
executed after a bogus trial

At least 3 children:

**Johann** - killed in Krasnodar fighting in the White Army

**Johanna**

**Peter** - Born about 1908

She signed letter of thanks for food packages in late 1922

Emilie with Johanna and Peter immigrated to Winnipeg in 1925

Emilie died 1974 in Windsor, Ontario

**Luise** - born 31 March 1876, married Oskar Simmersbach 4 January 1901,  
Oskar died 14 December 1918 in Breslau, Silesia, Luise died  
23 December 1950 in Saeckingen, Germany

**Emmy** - born 18 November 1883 on Luisental Chutor, Ekaterinoslav  
Requested food draft via *Mennonitische Rundschau* 7 June 1922

Address: Sadovaya Street No 40

Looking for Gustav Enss, Moundridge, Kansas

Signed letter of thanks for food packages late 1922

Unmarried, banished to the North and died there in 1941

Isaak Sudermann's grain business failed about 1894, but his wife Anna Dick  
inherited a large estate on the Krivoy Toretz River near Konstantinovka,  
(called Toretzkaya) so that is where they moved. Jakob and Amy  
Sudermann moved onto the estate as well

Isaac died 28 March 1918, wife Anna died 29 October, both in Berdyansk

**Jakob** - born 21 May 1852 in Berdyansk

Married Anna Schroeder 29 April 1875

She was born 27 March 1852 on a Taschtschenak estate

They lived on an estate in the Taschtschenak region, where most of their children were born, then moved to their own estate in Apanlee

Jacob was very much involved with philanthropic projects in the Molotschna region such as the Alexanderkrone *Zentralschule*, as well as the *Forsteidienst*, and the *Bethania Heilanstalt*

Children: Helene (1876), Anna (1877), Eva (1880), Jacob (1881), Louise (1883), David (1887) born in Apanlee

Jacob was murdered mid February 1918 in Halbstadt

Anna died 20 March 1933 in New York, Ignatyev Colony

**Abraham** - born 1853, probably in Berdyansk

Married **Katharina Martens**

Manufactured and sold white wine

He was kind hearted

No children

Heinrich - born 1857

(see separate entry for Heinrich Jakob Sudermann)

Leonhard - born about 1859 in Berdyansk

(see separate listing Leonhard Jakob Sudermann)

Father Jacob Sudermann died 12 March 1877 in Berdyansk

Eva died 12 August 1915 in Berdyansk

### **Sudermann, Johann Abraham**

Born 15 May 1787 in Goldschaar, West Prussia

Parents Abraham Sudermann and his first wife Katharina Dueck

Eldest child of Abraham Sudermann

Married Helena Claassen 24 September 1806 in Heubuden, Marienburg, West Prussia

Lived in Heubuden

Children:

Helena - born 4 December 1809 in Heubuden

Anna - born 20 January 1811 in Heubuden, died 5 March 1811 in Heubuden

Susanna - born 10 January 1813 in Heubuden, died 10 March 1811 in Heubuden

Elisabeth - born 1 June 1815 in Heubuden, married Kornelius Peter Penner 1834 in Rudnerweide, Molotschna, moved to Landskrone, immigrated to USA, Elisabeth died 14 March 1904 in Henderson, Nebraska

Johann - born 14 September 1817 in Heubuden

Abraham - born 1 April 1819 in Heubuden, died as an infant

Wife Helena died 1819 in Heubuden

Johann married Helena Wiebe 2 September 1819 in Heubuden, she was born in 1796

Children:

Abraham - born 14 July 1820 in Heubuden

Anna - born 14 June 1827 in Heubuden, probably died by 1835

**Jakob** - born 10 June 1828 in Heubuden



Family migrated from Heubuden to Rudnerweide, Molotschna in 1829  
Likely owned Farm No 12 in Rudnerweide

**Margaretha** - born about 1834 in Rudnerweide

Wife Helena died about 1835 in Rudnerweide

Family lived in Rudnerweide until at least 1850, then moved to Berdyansk by 1852

By 1852 had a third wife, also named **Helena**

Son Jakob moved with the family to Berdyansk

Father Johann was involved with horticulture in Berdyansk

### **Sudermann, Leonhard Abraham**

(see biography of Elder Leonhard Abraham Sudermann)

Born 21 April 1821 in Goldschaar, West Prussia

Parents Abraham Sudermann and his second wife Anna von Riesen, was youngest of 11 children  
Married Maria Sudermann in 1841

She was daughter of Abraham Sudermann, miller and Mennonite minister in Berdyansk

Had no children of their own, but had a foster daughter

Spent some time in Gnadenfeld helping relative Hermann Harder with his *Wirtschaft* and store

Moved from Gnadenfeld to Berdyansk by 1852, where he worked in a brick factory

Influenced by Eduard Wuest, became his friend

1859, the year Wuest died, Leonhard was elected as minister of the Mennonite church

When the congregation became independent in 1865 Leonhard was elected as Elder

One of the first features he added was Sunday School for the children on Sunday afternoons

While Sudermann had only the rudimentary primary school education, his preaching was  
appreciated for its warmth, simplicity and modesty

Leonhard often sought the advice of his good friend Cornelius Janzen, especially in public and  
business affairs

A leader in the immigration to the USA in the 1870s

Pastor of a small church *Emmaus Gemeinde*, in Whitewater, Kansas

Died 27 January 1900, in Whitewater

### **Sudermann, Leonhard Jakob**

Born about 1859 in Berdyansk

Parents Jakob Isaak Sudermann and Eva Unruh

Married **Elisabeth L Fehderau**

Lived in a large brick home on the same street as John E Greaves

Children:

**Abram**

**Jakob**

**Johann**

**Eva** - born 20 December 1890 in Berdyansk, married Peter Friesen

Leonhard - born 20 December 1890 in Berdyansk

(see separate listing for Leonhard Leonhard Sudermann)

Appointed Leader of the Berdyansk Mennonite Church in 1903

Taught Religion classes in the Mennonite *Realschule* 1905

At the start of World War I, end of September 1914, the Mennonite Church, under the

leadership of Elder Leonard Sudermann, held a special meeting. They prayed for the Czar and country and for victory for the Russian armed forces. The prayers were based on the Bible passage, "How much does the Lord love the people." The Mennonite Elementary School participated in the service

Elder of the Mennonite Church in Berdyansk by 1912

One of three members of a committee established to distribute food packages in Berdyansk in March of 1922

Requested food packages via the *Mennonitische Rundschau*, 31 May 1922

Address: Voronzovskaya Street, No 79

Looking for Gustav Enss, Moundridge, Kansas

Wrote a letter of thanks in late 1922 for the help given by North American Mennonites, letter was published in the *Mennonitische Rundschau* in November 1923

Was not one of the delegates to the All-Russian Mennonite Conference held in Moscow in January 1925

With his family was banished to Kazakhstan

Leonhard and his wife presumably died in Kazakhstan

### **Sudermann, Leonhard Leonhard**

Born 20 December 1890 in Berdyansk, twin of Eva Sudermann

Parents Leonhard Jakob Sudermann and Elisabeth L Fehderau

Married **Aganetha Riediger** 14 February 1918

Children:

**Leonhard** - born in Berdyansk about 1920, died in Kazakhstan

Peter - born in Waldheim, Molotschna, 22 February 1923 (see separate listing)

**Gerhard** - born 1925

The family first lived in Berdyansk, then in the unsettled times fled to the Molotschna, staying in the *Nebenhaus* of the Johann Willms family in Hierschau, then moving to Waldheim, where Peter was born

They moved back to Berdyansk, where Peter spent his childhood

Father Leonhard was an agronomist, so the family was assigned to many different places, therefore they moved a lot

He died about 1950 in Russia

### **Sudermann, N (probably Nikolai)**

Signed the letter of thanks for food packages written by Elder Leonhard Sudermann in late 1922

### **Sudermann, Peter**

Born 1921 in Waldheim, Molotschna

His parents, Leonhard and Margaretha Sudermann, together with brother Johann, had fled from Berdyansk to Hierschau in 1920, where they stayed in the *Nebenhaus* of the Johann Willms family

They then moved to Waldheim in 1921

Eventually, in 1941, Peter was studying in a technical school in Berdyansk

He fled from Berdyansk to Melitopol, hoping to be in German-occupied territory sooner by fleeing westward

The German advance stalled, so Peter hid in Melitopol for a week or two in the middle of

September 1941

Went back to Berdyansk. Eventually the German advance reached even there  
Eventually escaped from Russia to Germany, studied medicine, and became a surgeon  
Practiced in Winnipeg, Manitoba; he died peacefully 31 July 2006

**Sukkau, Alexander**

Vice Consul for Berdyansk, not sure which country  
Escaped to Germany by 16 February 1921  
Address: Koenigsfeld in Baden, Schwarzwald

**Thiessen, David**

Parents lived in Crimea, died when he was 7, then raised by foster-parents in Ohrloff,  
Molotschna, *Dorfschule* in Ohrloff  
Studied to be a teacher in Berdyansk, passed exams  
Then went to teach in Burugan  
Married Anna Warkentin of Ohrloff, 5 children, continued to teach in Burugan  
1897 sold everything and moved to Tilentschie, then to Spat  
Went to the south coast of Crimea the last time in 1923

**Thiessen, Elisabeth**

Widow  
Request for food draft via *Mennonitische Rundschau* 7 June 1922  
Looking for Heinrich Janzen, Mountain Lake, Minnesota

**Tjahrt, Paul Peter**

Formerly of Bergfeld near Polgi; originally from Poland; likely a refugee  
Requested food draft via *Mennonitische Rundschau* 7 June 1922  
Address: Selyonaya Street No 13  
Looking for Abraham Reimer, formerly Hochfeld and Schoenau, Heinrich Thiessen formerly  
Schoenau and Peter Siemens formerly Schoenwiese  
Signed the letter of thanks for food packages written by Elder Leonhard Sudermann in late 1922

**Toews, Johann Heinrich**

(this particular family spelled the name Toevs, although the rest of the relatives were Toews)  
Born 19 April 1836 in Pordenau, Molotschna  
Parents Heinrich Toews and Magdalena Jantzen  
Married **Maria Johann Rempel** 27 March 1856  
She was born 18 October 1834 in Ellerwald, Prussia  
Her parents were Johann P Rempel and Helena F Doerksen  
Lived in Berdyansk  
Children:

**Helena** - born 15 March 1857, died 22 January 1858 in Berdyansk

**Heinrich** - born 16 February 1859, baptized 10 June 1879 in Hillsboro, Kansas

**Johann** - born 20 October 1861

**Franz** - born 3 October 1863

**Peter** - born 31 May 1866

**Abram** - born 15 March 1869, died 15 August 1873 in Berdyansk

**Isbrand** - born 6 March 1871

**Maria** - born 23 January 1873

Immigrated to the USA, aboard the *S S Hosatia*, via Hamburg and Le Havre, landing in New York 1 July 1874. They settled in Kansas

Helena - born 5 June 1877 in Morris County, Kansas, baptized 7 June 1897, married Cornelius I Enns, died 6 June 1920

Father Johann Heinrich Toews died 30 December 1913

Mother Maria died 19 August 1903 in Buhler, Kansas

**Voth, Gerhard**

Married **Helene Sudermann**

She was born 21 September 1843

Parents Jacob Isaak Sudermann and Eva Unruh

Children:

**Gerhard**

**David**

Invited guests to the wedding of Heinrich Peter Bahnmann and Katharina Wiens on 11 January 1877

**Voth, Heinrich**

Invited guest to the wedding of Heinrich Peter Bahnmann and Katharina Wiens on 11 January 1877

**Voth, Tobias**

Born 16 July 1791 in Brenkenhoffswalde, West Prussia

His father was a minister

Attended local school, but largely self-taught

Started teaching school in Prussia age 16

1822 called to teach at the Ohrloff *Zentralschule*

Sponsored reading and mission circles for adults

Had disagreement with Johann Cornies, so he went to Schoenwiese, where he started his own private school; difficult circumstances, very poor

Taught in secondary school on the Steinbach Estate

Was very talented in many fields, music, poetry

Made lasting impression on many students

Died in Berdyansk, exact date not known

**Wagner, Albrecht Martin**

He was a Prussian citizen

Married **Elisabeth Ludwig Vetter**

Daughter **Alma** - born 14 September 1892 in Berdyansk, married Heinrich Martins

20 October 1918 in Ohrloff, Molotschna, he was born on Estate Montanai, Crimea, they lived in the Crimea, 4 children, immigrated to Brazil, Alma died 27 May 1974 in Blumenau, Brazil, Heinrich died 17 December 1975 in Blumenau, Brazil

**Wall, Jakob Peter**

Likely born on the Johannesheim Estate

Parents Peter and Maria Wall

Later, presumably after Peter died, Jakob and his older brother Johann were partner owners

of the estate, starting to manage it in 1891  
They sold the estate in 1904 to be able to invest in the Tokmak Railway  
At a meeting of the shareholders was elected vice-president of the executive 21 June 1911  
Not absolutely sure that he had a residence in Berdyansk , though he certainly attended  
board meetings in Berdyansk

**Wall, Johann Peter**

Born 31 January 1867, likely on the Johannesheim Estate  
Parents Peter and Maria Wall  
Father died when he was age 14  
Went to study 1 year in the United States  
Johannes and his younger brother Jakob were partner owners of the Johannesheim Estate, which  
they started to manage in 1891  
Married **Katharina Goossen** 5 October 1897  
She was born 12 March 1897 probably on the Wintergruen Estate  
Parents Martin and Elisabeth Goossen, living on the Wintergruen Estate  
Moved to the Johannesheim Estate in 1893, where Martin was the manager  
The couple lived on Johannesheim Estate  
In 1904 sold the estate and moved to Gnadenfeld  
Said to have sold the estate to invest in the Tokmak Railway  
Moved to Berdyansk in 1911  
At a meeting of the shareholders was elected to executive on 21 June 1911  
Children:  
2 children born who died very young  
Adopted 3 children  
**Maria Klein** - stayed single, died in Berdyansk  
**Katharina Goossen** (Katharina's cousin) - married Abraham Kliwer in Canada,  
5 children, died 1935 of tuberculosis  
During the Russian Civil War left Berdyansk and fled to the Crimea in 1919  
Immigrated to Ontario in 1924, then to Pigeon Lake, Manitoba in 1925  
After 1930 active as a preacher  
Johann died 19 August 1934 in Winnipeg, Manitoba  
Katharina married Paul F Gross in 1935

**Wall, Mr**

Wife **Maria Reimer**

Lived in Berdyansk

Children:

**Gerhard** - born 28 May 1870

Brother **A J** -

Sister **Rena**

Father died about February 1870

Mother died about 1873

The children immigrated to USA with 3 other orphans under the care of Rev Franz Ediger of  
Hebron, Kansas

Franz Ediger, wife Aganetha with 5 children, including Gerhard, boarded the  
*S S Vaderland* in Antwerp, arriving in Philadelphia 29 June 1877  
Gerhard married Amalia Ruth 4 April 1897, 2 children, died 3 December 1947 in Halstead,  
Kansas

**Wall, Mr**

Wife **Mrs Wall**

Son **Fedor** born 1890

He was living at N B Spuck 307 in Berdyansk in 1942

**Wall, Mr**

Wife **Mrs Wall**

Lived in Berdyansk at least 1912 to 1915

Children:

**Anna** - born 13 May 1912 in Berdyansk, living with Johann Wall, (likely her brother)  
In Berdyansk in 1942

**Johann** - born 30 December 1915 in Berdyansk, living at 11 Linie No7,  
Berdyansk in 1942

**Wall, Mr**

Wife **Mrs Wall**

Daughter **Anna** born 1917 in Berdyansk

Lived at N W Spuck 30 in Berdyansk in 1942

It is possible that Wall was her married name

**Wall, Mr**

Wife **Mrs Wall**

Daughter **Elvira (Elfie)** - born 30 August 1923 in Berdyansk

Married Johann J Thiessen

He was born 12 January 1915 in Bescharan, Crimea

They had 10 children, all born in Ontario 1944 to 1959

**Wall, Mr**

Wife **Mrs Wall**

Daughter **Maria** born 25 January 1905 in Berdyansk

She lived in Berdyansk at Chukovskaya 35 in 1942

It is possible that Wall was her married name

**Wallmann, Mr**

Wife **Mrs Wallmann**

Daughter **Elisabeth** - born 1895 in Berdyansk

Lived at N B Spuck 15 in Berdyansk in 1942

It is possible that Wallmann was her married name

**Warkentin, Gerhard**

Wife **Maria**

Lived in Berdyansk in 1882

**Wedel, Benjamin**

Born about 1823

Wife **Carolina** - born about 1833

Originally listed as living with Friederich Kunkel of Waldheim, Molotschna Farm No 50  
Moved from Waldheim to Berdyansk by 1851  
Watchmaker in Berdyansk by 1851

**Wedel, Mr**

Wife **Mrs Wedel**

Daughter **Amalia** - born 7 February 1886 in Berdyansk  
Lived at Savodshaya in Berdyansk in 1942  
It is possible that Wedel was her married name

**Wiebe, Abraham**

Wife **Mrs Wiebe**

Wealthy person who moved in from Rudnerweide  
Built a rather large home and offered the second story as a meeting place for Sunday services,  
likely about 1845-1863

**Wiebe, Abraham**

Born about 1824

Married **Margaretha Huebert** about 1850

She was born 10 November 1824 in Margenau, Molotschna  
Parents Peter Klaas and Margaretha Huebert

Lived in Berdyansk

Children:

**Margaretha** - born 4 March 1853 in Berdyansk, baptized 1872 in Berdyansk, immigrated  
to Kansas, likely before 1876, married Peter F Pauls 29 January 1879, 7 children,  
Peter died after 1890, Margaretha married Gerhard Fast, Gerhard died  
8 August 1907, Margaretha died 31 January 1908 in Hillsboro, Kansas

**Abraham** - born 14 July 1857

**Elisabeth** - born 26 October 1860, baptized 1878 in Bruderthal, Kansas, married  
Aron A Regehr 13 March 1883, 10 children, Elisabeth died 31 October 1928,  
Aron died 8 November 1939, both in Inman, Kansas

**Nikolai** (Nicklaus) - born 26 January 1862

Father Abraham died about 1862

The family immigrated to Kansas, likely before 1877

Mother Margaretha died in Inman, Kansas

**Wiebe, Abram**

Son of Sara Wiebe (nee Ediger)

Lawyer, shot and killed in 1920

**Wiebe, Abram**

Born 17 November 1901 in Blumenort, Molotschna

Parents Peter Wiebe and Elisabeth Dirks

Lived in Schardau and Blumenort

Peter Wiebe died February 1920 in South Russia

Abram died 1922 in Berdyansk

**Wiebe, Jakob**

Born about 1822



Father Johann Wiebe of Farm No 26 in Rudnerweide, Molotschna  
Moved from Rudnerweide to Berdyansk by 1852  
Operated a treadmill

**Wiebe, Peter**

Wife **Mrs Wiebe**

Son **Peter**

17 year old Peter, in the sixth class of the local *Gymnasium*, injured in a bathing accident in August of 1909, and died two days later

In July of 1914 new applications for the Mennonite Elementary School were to be handed in to Teacher Peter Wiebe

Teacher from at least 1909 to 1922

One of three members of a committee established to distribute food packages in Berdyansk in March 1922

**Wiebe, Peter Jakob**

In 1922 lived in Berdyansk, requested food packages via the *Mennonitische Rundschau*, 31 May 1922

Address: Kolonie, 2te Linie

Looking for Abraham Braeul of Newton, Kansas

**Wieler, Bernhard**

Invited guest to the wedding of Heinrich Peter Bahnmann and Katharina Wiens on 11 January 1877

**Wiens, Bernhard**

Born 1853 in the Molotschna Colony

Married **Katharina Huebert**

Her parents were Abraham Huebert and Margaretha Langemann

Children:

**Helena** - born 18 August 1894 in Berdyansk

Married Abraham J Voth, 2 children

Died 10 July 1944 in Winnipeg, Manitoba

Bernhard died 1922

**Wiens, D**

Together with Mr H Janzen owned the Wiens and Janzen Rope Factory

Later purchased by Peter Riediger

**Wiens, Johann**

Invited guest to the wedding of Heinrich Peter Bahnmann and Katharina Wiens on 11 January 1877

**Wiens, Julius**

Born about 1824

Father Johann Wiens, Farm No 10 in Ohrloff

Moved from Ohrloff to Berdyansk

Merchant in Berdyansk by 1852, managing a business in a kiosk

**Wiens, Mr**

Wife **Mrs Wiens**

Daughter **Aganetha (Natascha)** - born 30 July 1909 in Berdyansk, family probably immigrated to Canada in 1926, Aganetha married Hermann A Koop in Canada in 1943, 3 children, Aganetha died 13 April 1982

**Wiens, Nikolai Johann**

Born 28 October 1819 in the Molotschna, likely in Ohrloff

Parents Johann Wiens and Susanna Reimer

Married **Margaretha Janzen** 6 December 1845

She was born 27 February 1827 in Schoensee, Molotschna

Parents Heinrich Peter Janzen and Anna Hamm

Her parents later owned Estate Silberfeld

Heinrich and Anna Janzen had 6 children, of whom Margaretha was the youngest

Michael Janzen was the oldest child in the family

After the marriage the couple lived in Berdyansk

Nikolai was a grain merchant; there were huge granaries on the yard

Is said to have owned at least 8 properties in Berdyansk

Children:

Susanna - born 22 November 1846 in Berdyansk, married Isbrand Peter Rempel  
18 January 1867 (see separate listing of Isbrand Rempel), had son Nikolai,  
Susanna died 25 April 1869 in Berdyansk

**Anna** - born 29 January 1850 in Berdyansk, married **David Schroeder** of Mariawohl,  
Molotschna on 4 August 1870, lived in Berdyansk

Had at least 9 children: **Nikolai, Heinrich, Peter, Anna, Margaretha, Maria,**  
**David, Wilhelm, Alexander**; some died early in childhood

Husband David died 1895 in Berdyansk, leaving Anna with 8 children

In 1927 three of the children still alive: Peter, Margaretha, Maria

**Margaretha** - born 21 April 1854 in Berdyansk, married **Hermann Voth**

Lived in Berdyansk in their early married life, then moved to Kuban

Children: 5 girls, 3 boys

Maria - married Heinrich Kornelsen, 4 children, died young

Anna - married Johann G Martens, 4 children, Anna died age 31,  
all 4 children eventually moved to BC

Margaretha - died 5 November 1895

Maria - born 5 December 1855 in Berdyansk (see listing of Dietrich Guenther)

Married her cousin Dietrich Guenther 12 July 1879. It was his second marriage

They lived in Berdyansk

Children:

Nikolai - born 1880, married, large family by 1927

Daughter - born 1881, died 1882

Dietrich - born 1882, died 1883

Maria died 28 December 1882

Katharina - born 7 March 1859 in Berdyansk (see separate entry Regier, Katharina  
Nikolai (nee Wiens))

Mother Margaretha ill again in July 1859, went to Nassau, a colony village, to be treated,

without success

Margaretha's father, Heinrich Janzen, died 13 September 1867. The Wienses went to the funeral

Margaretha died 10 September 1874 in Berdyansk

Nikolai died 29 July 1883 in Berdyansk

**Wiens, Peter**

Born about 1835

Father Daniel Wiens of Farm No 26 of Tiege, Molotschna

Peter moved from Marienthal, Molotschna to Berdyansk by 1852

Worked as miller's assistant

**Willems, Mr**

Wife **Mrs Willems**

Daughter **Katharina** - born 1885 in Berdyansk

She lived in Berdyansk at Sadovaya 59 in 1942

It is possible that Willems was her married name

**Willms, Anna Peter**

In 1922 lived in Berdyansk; requested food packages via the *Mennonitische Rundschau*, 31 May 1922

Address: Kolonie 2te Linie, No 3

Looking for Aron Wiens

**Willms, Franz M**

Born 25 December 1852

Second Wife **Anna Rempel**, daughter of Isbrand Rempel and Katharina Wiens

Franz was killed by the Bolsheviks 27 October 1921

Blind, Anna continued to live in the same house where her husband had been killed

**Willms, H**

Wife **Mrs Willms**

H Willms died before 1877 leaving his wife a widow

Widow H Willms was an invited guest to the wedding of Heinrich Peter Bahnmann and Katharina Wiens on 11 January 1877

**Willms, Jakob**

Invited guest to the wedding of Heinrich Peter Bahnmann and Katharina Wiens on 11 January 1877

**Willms, Peter**

Invited guest to the wedding of Heinrich Peter Bahnmann and Katharina Wiens on 11 January 1877

**Willms, Peter Peter**

Requested food draft via *Mennonitische Rundschau* 7 June 1922

Address: Kolonie 2te Linie

**X, Mr** (name not revealed by Elder Leonhard Sudermann in his story)

One person, who eagerly attended Berdyansk Mennonite Church meetings, but was not even a member, seems to have had a special talent to produce trouble. He had his own children baptized in a colony church, probably in the Molotschna

When the building committee for the church building had decided that the size of the sanctuary should be 9 by 5 fathoms “a member who had a special talent for causing disruption in the congregation utilized his talents in order to hinder construction.” The building committee was dismissed, but eventually the structure was built by the replacement committee, the first services in the new church being held in 1863

After Elder Leonhard Sudermann was elected this man watched him very carefully, and detected that he had committed an administrative error. He complained to brothers the next day, and added, “Such a man is not worthy of his office.” The brothers reported this to the Elder, and advised him to repair the breach quickly. He went directly to the man, and said that he agreed with him entirely. This obviously caught Mr X by surprise and at first he had little to say. Finally he admitted that if Sudermann had that insight he was content. He then invited the Elder in for a cup of tea.

Mr X was well-educated and worked in an office as a secretary for a long time. He later prepared the documents addressed to the high authorities which resulted in the expulsion of Cornelius Janzen and Isaak Peters from the Russian Empire. There was also proof that had Elder Sudermann not immigrated when he did, an exit visa would have arrived on his doorstep courtesy of the same gentleman.

When taken to task for these actions he apparently said that he considered it his duty to perform them

**Y, Mr**

Wife **Mrs Y**

Owned a windmill in Berdyansk, but business was not doing too well

Through a Berdyansk development company were able to purchase 150 dessiatines of land in Ogus-Tobe, Crimea

Using 7 pair of oxen they took all their belongings and the dismantled mill, and moved to Ogus-Tobe in May 1883

At least another 4 relatives also moved to Ogus-Tobe and area at about the same time

## PEOPLE LIVING IN BERDYANSK IN 1942

Anna Falk - Sredniy 18  
Helena Falk - 7 Linie No 7  
Elisabeth Federau - Sadovaya 59  
Maria Friesen - Vaksalia 28  
Natalia Hildebrand - Arbeiterdig 4  
Anastasia Hildebrandt - N B Spuck 1  
Friederich Hildebrandt - Schkolnaya 4  
Nikolai Hildebrand - N B Spuck 10  
Klara Klassen - Vostotsch Prospect 19  
Bernhard Krueger - Sobornaya 1  
Maria Martens - Ukrainskaya 8  
Fedor Wall - N B Spuck 307  
Anna Wall - 11 Linie No 7  
Anna Wall - N W Spuck 30  
Johann Wall - 11 Linie No 7  
Maria Wall - Chukovskaya 35  
Elisabeth Wallmann - N B Spuck 15  
Amalia Wedel - Savodshaya  
Katharina Willems - Sadovaya 59



Nikolai Wiens family portrait  
 Standing: Katharina, Nikolai, Maria  
 Seated: Margaretha, Margaretha (mother)  
 and Anna. Odessa, 1871



Nikolai and Margaretha (nee Janzen) Wiens



Anna Klassen and Katharina Wiens  
 On Anna's wedding day  
 21 April 1874



Heinrich and Katharina Bahnmann  
 Wedding portrait, 11 January 1977



Isbrand Isbrand Friesen



Minister Peter Martin Riediger



Amy Greaves Sudermann  
on the estate



Amy Greaves and Jakob Sudermann  
1900





Gerhard and Maria Warkentin  
in 1882



Johann and Katharina (nee Goossen) Wall



David Heinrich Epp  
Editor of *Der Botschafter*



Abraham Abraham Neufeld



Three generations of Rempels in Berdyansk, 1885

Patriarch Peter Peter Rempel in the centre

Back row l-r: Anna (nee Rempel) Willms and husband Franz Willms, son Jakob Rempel and wife, son Peter Rempel

Front row l-r: son Johann Rempel and wife Elisabeth (nee Huebert), son Isbrand Rempel, Peter Peter Rempel and his second wife Elisabeth Wiens, Margaretha, wife of son Peter

Sitting in front: Nikolai Isbrand Rempel, son of Isbrand Rempel

### Three Generations of Rempels



Peter Peter Rempel and second wife Elisabeth Wiens, 1869



Isbrand Peter Rempel and wife Susanna (nee Wiens), 1869



Nikolai Isbrand Rempel, 1896

## MENNONITE INSTITUTIONS

### **Der Botschafter**

This Mennonite periodical was published twice a week  
It was initiated in an attempt to bond together Mennonites who were scattered throughout Russia, starting during a period of unrest and revolution in the country  
Chief editor was David H Epp, with the help of H A Ediger  
It usually had 6 pages, sometimes 8, with 2-4 pages of advertising  
It presented religious and devotional material, but also discussed events of the day in the fields of politics, education and science  
The first issue appeared 13 August 1905, printed in Ekaterinoslav by Publisher Johann Thiessen of Ekaterinoslav  
Frequent strikes in Ekaterinoslav, as well as other difficulties, made it necessary to transfer printing to Berdyansk in 1907, where H A Ediger was the publisher  
In 1911 cost 5 rubles per year, 3 rubles for half a year, and 50 kopecs for a month  
Together with all other German journals, it ceased publication in 1914 at the beginning of World War I. Despite carrying very patriotic articles and reports, even after the onset of hostilities, the last issue allowed to be published seems to have been that of 28 October 1914

### **Deutsches Krankenhaus**

Hospital opened by Dr Franz Dyck in Berdyansk, official opening on 15 February 1913  
Advertised in *Der Botschafter* 4 January 1914

### **Elementary School**

The school probably existed from the early 1850s to at least 1922  
David Goerz was teacher in the Mennonite elementary school 1869-1873  
July 1914 it was announced that additional teaching strength was being added to teach Russian language  
July 1914 applications for entering the school were to be given to Teacher P Wiebe  
Peter Wiebe was a teacher from at least 1909 to 1922

### **Mennonite Brethren and Berdyansk**

Eduard Hugo Otto Wuest was pastor of a Separated Evangelical Brotherhood Church at Neuhoftnung, near Berdyansk. He moved there from Germany in 1845. Revival broke out in the villages surrounding Berdyansk because of his ministry  
He inspired a circle of ministers "*Wuestische Brueder*" with his sermons, conferences and Bible studies. This group included Leonhard Sudermann, Jakob Buhler and Hermann Sudermann of Berdyansk  
Johann Claassen, who would later be one of the founders of the Mennonite Brethren Church, was active in organizing a *Bruderschule* in Gnadenfeld. In this regard he travelled to St Petersburg and Reval in 1854 in the company of four younger brothers. Included were

Wilhelm Bartel and Hermann Sudermann of Berdyansk  
Bartel was originally from Gnadenfeld, then moved to Berdyansk. He was strongly influenced by Wuest, but also by a radical charismatic named Kappes. Bartel was in the original group to separate from the Gnadenfeld Mennonite Church, but signed 2 documents which basically asked about a reconciliation. He participated in the *Froehliche Richtung*  
Johann Claassen travelled from the Molotschna to St Peterburg on a number of occasions, sometimes going via Berdyansk. It was going in the opposite direction from his planned destination, but it confused the spies who were watching him. He also sent his mail via Berdyansk, because he was convinced his letters were being opened in the Molotschna  
In 1861 Johann Claassen sent a letter to “the dear brothers and sisters in Berdyansk and in the Molotschna” pointing to the pitfalls of the *Froehliche Richtung*. Bartel was probably not the only one referred to in Berdyansk  
Berdyansk was the regional centre, so the court was based there. Johann Claassen was in court in Berdyansk on 14 May 1864 regarding legal questions relating to the Kuban settlement in the Caucasus

### **Mennonite Church**

Abraham Isaak Sudermann had been a church leader in West Prussia, and was ordained as Elder of the Heubuden congregation in 1823.  
Sudermann moved to Berdyansk in 1841, and after he built a treadmill to secure his livelihood, he turned his efforts to church work.  
He began to hold Sunday services in a large room in his own house; attendance was good.  
Abraham Wiebe from Rudnerweide moved to Berdyansk; he built a rather large home and offered the second story as a meeting place for Sunday services.  
The Wiebe home was used for several years, but in time even that became too small  
When a school was built the classroom was used; when the congregation gradually increased extra benches ensured that there was enough room, although the seats were not always comfortable  
Many of the Mennonites of Berdyansk were members of the Pordenau Mennonite Church, so the initial affiliation was with that congregation and its elder, Heinrich Toews.  
Toews considered it his duty to periodically minister to the Berdyansk congregation. In 1848 Toews held a ministerial election in that city, to provide supervision and nurture for his members. Isbrand Isbrand Friesen, originally from Tiegenhagen, Molotschna, was elected. David Fast, formerly from Rudnerweide, was elected deacon. From 1848 on, the two ministers alternately led the worship services  
In 1853 there were 47 members  
1857 mentioned affiliation with Pordenau Mennonite Church, with Isbrand Isbrand Friesen minister of this congregation  
On 30 September 1859 Leonhard Abraham Sudermann elected as minister, with 79 votes  
Election occurred in Gnadenfeld, and his inaugural sermon was held there  
In the early 1850s some need expressed for a new church building  
Had provided enough room beside the school to allow for a church to be built  
Began organizing a fund drive in Prussia, but also received funds from Molotschna,

Chortitza and from local members  
 Building committee started construction of a foundation in 1858  
 Dispute about proposed length of the building, building committee dismissed  
 Finally building began again  
 Held first worship service in their “solidly built brick church” on the first day of  
 Pentecost in 1863. By the time everything was completed it was totally paid for  
 Elections held 27 July 1864 under the supervision of Elder Dietrich Warkentin of Lichtenau  
 Elected were ministers Bernhard Buhler and Cornelius Friesen, and deacon David  
 Hiebert (Huebert)  
 All “did not hesitate to follow the call of the Lord”  
 9 August 1864 Buhler preached his inaugural sermon, Friesen not until the first Advent  
 Early September 1865 Leonhard Sudermann elected as elder, and church became  
 administratively independent  
 Elder Sudermann started Sunday afternoon baptismal classes, and Bible classes for children,  
 the first Sunday School held by Mennonites in Russia  
 Gradually Sudermann was able to obtain the confidence of the whole congregation  
 Sudermann immigrated to USA in 1876, Bernhard Buhler and David Huebert in 1877  
 Cornelius Friesen died a few years later  
 Due to lack of leadership the church lost its independence a few years later  
 Abraham Jantzen appointed minister by Gnadenfeld in 1881, serving the congregation  
 Sunday mornings, while an elder from the Molotschna presided over baptism and  
 communion  
 Leonhard Jakob Sudermann was appointed “leader” in 1903  
 Bible Conference 5-7 October 1908, attended by Gerhard Harder. It was reported to have  
 been a time of blessing (*eine gesegnete Gemeinschaftskonferenz*)  
 In 1910 the Rudnerweide elder served Berdyansk  
 23-25 August 1911 General Conference of Mennonite Churches in Russia was in Berdyansk  
 Minister Peter Riediger is listed as a correspondent for *Friedensstimme* in December 1912  
 He was a minister of the Berdyansk Mennonite Church, being listed as in charge of  
 some of the services in 1913  
 By October 1914 Leonhard Jakob Sudermann was called the elder  
 At the start of World War I, end of September 1914, the Mennonite Church, under the  
 leadership of Elder Leonard Sudermann, held a special meeting. They prayed for the  
 Czar and country and for victory for the Russian armed forces. The prayers were based  
 on the Bible passage, “How much does the Lord love the people.” The Mennonite  
 Elementary School participated in the service  
 Famine in 1922; 3 members of the congregation starved to death  
 Elder Leonhard Sudermann was one of the three chosen to distribute food vouchers  
 In late 1922 Leonhard Sudermann was still the Elder, David H Epp a minister, Abraham  
 Sudermann a minister and Reinhard Kerber a deacon  
 Berdyansk was visited by David M Hofer, likely in early 1923. He found that the local  
 Mennonite congregation had a very nice church building and an active spiritual leader.  
 He was able to greet the local church community and to tell them about the origin and

further development of the helping agency (MCC)  
Not sure how the church functioned after 1923  
No representative was sent to the General Conference held in Moscow January 1925  
It is likely that Elder Sudermann and his family were banished to Kazakhstan  
The church building no longer exists (2006)

### ***Realschule***

In 1905 Abraham Abraham Neufeld, principal of the Chortitza *Zentralschule* from 1890-1905, moved to Berdyansk to allow better opportunities for the education of his children  
He started his own *Realschule*, which was granted the rights of a government-operated school  
Offered enhanced classes in Religion and German; Religion taught by Elder Leonhard Sudermann  
In the 1906 school year only 27 “German” students  
In 1906 received permission to establish a fund to help poor students attend  
Neufeld died of a stroke 9 January 1909  
Peter Peter Fast was appointed to replace him  
19 February 1912 the *Realschule* had a literary musical evening, which showed that in both fields the students were very proficient. Teacher of Russian language, Mr Vassilykovo, presented a well received talk about a Russian poet.  
In 1912 negotiations were underway between the city and P P Fast, for the government to take over the management of the school. This was warmly supported by the governor of Taurida province. It was hoped the takeover would occur 1 January 1913, or at the latest by 1 July 1913  
7 July 1914 Fast was confirmed as Director of the by then government controlled *Realschule*

### **Red Cross Committee**

This committee, likely consisting mainly of Mennonites, held its first meeting on 20 July 1914, shortly after declaration of war, the start of World War I  
Heinrich A Ediger was the local treasurer of the committee  
Plans were laid to raise funds to care for wounded and sick soldiers, but also to help the families of those who were away from home because of the war  
Brochures were to be printed and distributed, and articles placed in newspapers to emphasize the need  
The German Russians were encouraged to express their loyalty, and to pray for the Russian Fatherland  
A special meeting of Mennonites held 30 July 1914 decided to sew linens to help the families of those at war, and to collect money to support the Red Cross Committee.  
P Sudermann was to be the contact person

After 1903 Peter Franz Dick taught at a Mennonite school in Berdyansk  
He was also, as of December 1912, one of the contributing writers for *Friedensstimme*



## MENNONITE EVENTS

### Wedding Ceremony Tuesday 11 January 1877

Katharina Wiens was born 19 March 1859 in Berdyansk. She was the fifth and youngest daughter of Nikolai Wiens and Margaretha Janzen. Nikolai Wiens was a wealthy grain merchant. Katharina had chronic troubles with her eyes and was treated at a number of clinics in Russia and Europe. Her mother was also ill, going to a number of spas in Germany and Austria, but she died a few months after these treatments, 10 September 1874.

Heinrich Peter Bahnmann was born 29 October 1852 in Berdyansk. He was the youngest of three sons of Peter Jakob Bahnmann and Maria Kaethler. Although Heinrich was more than six years older than Katharina, they became close friends. The friendship even withstood separation for some time when Heinrich was in the Kuban. Heinrich's father asked for official consent for the marriage from Katharina's father in the autumn of 1876 - and it was given.

Invitations for the wedding were sent out to a wide circle of friends, including every single Mennonite household in Berdyansk. According to Katharina, "Papa didn't want to leave anyone out." As was the practice a *Polter Abend* was held the evening before when friends got together to honour the couple.

On the wedding day the couple and relatives went to the photographers, then to the church at noon for the wedding ceremony, which was performed by Minister Bernhard Buhler. After the ceremony the whole company went by sled to the Wiens residence, where they were served coffee, buns and cakes. In the late evening the family had a supper.

Many of the relatives of both families lived in the colonies or on estates; many of these people had not been able to attend the wedding because there was a lot of snow, and the weather was cold.

After the marriage the new couple bought a farm in Rudnerweide, Molotschna, then after three years sold the farm and returned to Berdyansk, where they spent the next twelve years.

The list of the family names of the Berdyansk people invited to the wedding is:

Widow Abrams, Peter Bahnmann, David Bartel, Jakob Derksen, David Dirks, Maria Dirks (1 person), Isaak Dueck, Jakob Dueck, Johann Dueck, Abram Ediger, Peter Ediger, Abram Enns, Wilhelm Ewert, David Fast, Aaron Fehderau, Jakob Fehderau, Johann Fehderau, Salomon Fehderau, Florence (?), Cornelius Friesen, Heinrich Friesen, Hermann Friesen, Isbrand Friesen, Peter Friesen, Johann Funk, Dietrich Guenther, Barbara Harder (1 person), Nikolai Harder, David Hiebert (Huebert), Dietrich Hiebert (Huebert), Johann Hiebert (Huebert), Gerhard Hildebrand, Abram Janzen, Cornelius Janzen, Michael Janzen, Cornelius Klassen, David Kaethler, Thomas Koop, D Loewen, Jakob Neufeld, Peter Neufeld, Peter Neufeld, Jakob Penner, Peter Quiring, Jakob Rempel, Peter Rempel, Widow Abram Schmidt, David Schroeder, H Spenst, Hermann Sudermann, Isaak Sudermann, Jacob Sudermann, Gerhard Voth, Heinrich Voth, Bernhard Wieler, Johann Wiens, Franz Willms, Widow H Willms, Jakob Willms, Peter Willms

### **Bible Conference 5-7 October 1908**

A *Gemeinschaftskonferenz* (Fellowship conference) was advertized in a number of issues of *Friedensstimme*

It was felt that in the past God's people had benefitted by studying His word, gaining new insights and strength for the Christian life.

The subject for discussion on these days was to be:

The Cross of our Lord Jesus Christ

(Galatians 6:14)

1. Its importance for God
2. Its importance for the world
3. Its importance for the Church of God

Prayer meeting 8:30 AM, morning session 9:30-11:30 AM, afternoon session 3-5 PM, evening evangelistic service 7 PM

Itinerant Minister (*Reiseprediger*) Gerhard Harder participated in this conference. He wrote: "For three days we looked towards Golgatha and studied the meaning of the death of Jesus... This was a wonderful, deeply stirring time. We saw new and beautiful things about the one who was the best of mankind. After such days it was easy to sing, "In the depth of my heart your name and cross glow all the time, every hour, Of this I can be happy." This spirit spills over when, from the time of blessing, it is back to work."

### **General Conference of Mennonite Churches in Russia held in Berdyansk on 23-25 August 1911**

Announcement of the conference was printed in *Friedensstimme* August 17 when permission was finally given to hold the conference.

41 churches were represented by 147 delegates.

Delegates were greeted by the local elder, Leonhard Sudermann. He expressed thanks that the government had allowed the conference to proceed. Using Joshua 5:13-15 he emphasized that when God assigned a task, he also gave the strength to carry it out.

Elder Heinrich Unruh was the keynote speaker, since the designated Elder Heinrich Dirks had at the last moment been prevented from attending. Unruh, using Revelation 3:7-12 as text, felt that the encouragement for the present and the future given the church in Philadelphia could apply equally well to the situation in Russia. A definite lack at the time was felt to be a dearth of preachers in the churches.

The process of registration and the closing of churches was of considerable concern. Delegates felt that the government should be reminded of the privileges Mennonites had concerning their churches, with legislation that had existed for over 100 years. It was suggested that a friendly member of the Duma could best emphasize this.

Lack of enough trained ministers was of some concern. Special study courses, and even a seminary were considered.

Reports were heard from Bethania (Jakob Sudermann of Apanlee), and the Forestry Alternate Service.

The question of Mennonites marrying non-Mennonites was discussed. The executive was asked to obtain advice as to the legal status of such marriages.

The local congregation was thanked for the love and hospitality they had shown.

Elder Peter Friedrichsen of Busaw-Aktatschi concluded the conference with a sermon based on Psalm 113:1-7.

The conference felt that the problem of training ministers was acute enough to ask for the publication of one of the sermons on the subject, that of Johann Klassen. The complete text was published in *Friedensstimme* - "*Vorbereitung und Ausbildung der Prediger.*"

The conference was attended by itinerant minister Elder Hermann A Neufeld and his two sons, Hermann and Kornelius. They thoroughly enjoyed their tours of the city and its busy harbour.

### **Famine of 1922**

Report of the Delegate of the Berdyansk Mennonite Church about the needs of the place:

"At this time 190 Mennonites live in Berdyansk, some of whom are permanent residents, but the majority are refugees. Until 1 January 1922 most have, with difficulty, been able to manage, partly by selling off their personal clothing, linens and furniture. A few had positions in government institutions. But since many of the institutions were liquidated 1 January, and in those remaining the employment has been reduced by up to 70%; the majority is now totally without means. At this point only 6 members are employed. Since the prices of most commodities are rising, the situation for most is catastrophic. Three members of the church have already starved to death. The help we have received to date consists of 24 packages received from friends in America and a one time help from Mr Willing consisting of 14 packages, 15 pud beans and one barrel of herring. Until now all requests for additional help from the American and Dutch action committees have been refused. Because of our distance from the colonies we have not been written into the overall lists. It is impossible to find work. Some of us have found day labour in the gardens; the wages paid by the employers consist of a breakfast of tea without sugar and some bread, for midday meal cabbage soup with water, and for supper again tea without sugar and some bread. This the wage for a 12-hour work day. That it is impossible to feed a whole family under these circumstances is self-evident. Many have, those who still have property, broken-down buildings to use for fuel (a pud of coal costs 800,000 rubles), and also to barter for food. If we do not receive help in the near future many are facing death by starvation."

The Delegate, Johann Doerksen, 17 June 1922

Published in the *Mennonitische Rundschau* 13 September 1922, p 11

Nikolai Schroeder of Berdyansk, brother of Margaretha Schroeder, was reported to have died of starvation in April or early May, 1922

### **Visit by David M Hofer of Chicago**

David Hofer was involved with the distribution of MCC food and clothing during the famine of 1922 and 1923. After this work was completed he also held a series of evangelistic meetings in South Russia. He briefly visited Berdjansk sometime before August 1923, and reported on his time in the city.

"The city, is of course, on the Sea of Azov, and is well situated and clean. Here we found a group of about 150 Mennonites, who, in the time of greatest need, required the help of the

American Mennonite Relief. Now, however, the situation has improved somewhat, so that only the poorest widows with small children require food. The local Mennonite congregation has a very nice church building and an active spiritual leader. We were able to greet the local church community and to tell them about the origin and further development of the helping agency. Here we also found ruins from the time of the last years of war. Many a previously wealthy owner now is reduced to living in a small adjoining room, which now serves as the livingroom. The outlook for crops, especially winter wheat, is good in this region.”

### **Letter of thanks for the help of the North American Mennonites**

A letter of thanks for the help given to the Berdyansk Mennonites in their distress during the famine was written by Elder Leonhard Sudermann, likely in late 1922, and was published in the *Mennonitische Rundschau* 14 November 1923. It was signed by 28 others, many of whom were leaders in the Mennonite community at the time.

“Today it is eight months since the first food packages arrived from our brothers in America - on the first day of Easter (Easter that year was April 1, so it was probably seven months). In time more packages followed. What that meant for us is hard to describe, but it will not be forgotten by us or our children, and will be recorded in our history.

Before we bid this, in many ways difficult, but also noteworthy and blessing filled year farewell, we express heartfelt thanks to our brothers across the ocean for the love they have shown us, for every gift sent to us - you have done a great thing.

We are also thankful for those who were willing to give of their time and energy for this great work of love. God reward them all, unto their children and future generations, here on this earth and in eternity. We covet your love as we approach the New Year. May we soon be self-sufficient and be able to produce enough food for ourselves.

Leonhard Sudermann, Elder

David H Epp, minister, A Sudermann, minister, A Sudermann (Senior), R Kerber, deacon, Micka Mathis, Kornelius Heidebrecht, G Heidebrecht, Anna Federau, D Heidebrecht, J Heidebrecht, A Dyck, Suse Heidebrecht, N Sudermann, Susi Heinrichs, Paul P Tjahrt, Agathe Fast, Peter Schroeder, H Federau, D Friesen, M Tscherez (Tcheretz), E V Sudermann, K Janzen, E Sudermann, Abr Jantzen, M Dyck, H Doerksen, J Doerksen, Kat Dyck

## MIGRATION TO THE UNITED STATES AND CANADA IN THE 1870S

Elder Leonhard Sudermann was the leader and speaker for the Molotschna delegation sent to St Petersburg in February, 1871, to negotiate possible terms for the Mennonites regarding avoidance of military service

The delegates were:

Elder Leonhard Sudermann from Berdyansk

Peter Goerz of the Rudnerweide Church

Franz Isaak of the Ohrloff Church

Hermann Janzen, Halbstadt Volost secretary

The lack of success of these discussions played a part in Elder Sudermann's determination to migrate to North America

### People who migrated directly from Berdyansk to North America (mostly the USA)

#### **Bahnmann, Cornelius Cornelius**

Wife **Katharina Sudermann**

**Cornelius**

**Jakob**

**Katharina**

**Franz**

**Heinrich**

**Anna**

**Aron**

**Peter**

**Johann**

**Susanna**

**Helena**

Family migrated to Canada on the *SS Quebec*, landing in Quebec 23 June 1876

At least some of the family lived in Kleinstadt, Manitoba, where Anna died 4 August 1897

#### **Bahnmann, Jakob**

Wife **Margaretha Fast**

**Jakob**

**Peter**

**Margaretha**

**Justina**

**Katharina**

**Abram**

**Anna**

Jakob Bahnmann family on ship list of 22 July 1875, arriving in Ontario or Manitoba

Subsequently on lists of *Reinlaender Gemeinde Buch 1880-1903*

**Bergen, Jakob**

Wife **Helena Rempel**

**Aganetha**

**Elisabeth**

**Helena**

**Gerhard**

**Katharina**

**Anna**

**Maria**

**Sarah**

Departed Hamburg and Le Havre on the *S S Cimbria*, arrived in New York 27 August 1874

Likely settled in Enid, Oklahoma

**Buhler, Bernhard Abraham**

Wife **Anna Penner**

**Abraham**

**Bernhard**

**Maria**

**Elisabeth**

**Johann**

Departed Antwerp on the *S S Vaderland*, arrived in Philadelphia 29 June 1977

Settled in Buhler, Kansas

**Enns, Jakob**

Wife **Maria Sommerfeld**

**Jakob**

**Maria**

**Margaretha**

Departed Hamburg and Le Havre on the *S S Holsatia*, arriving in New York 1 July 1874

Settled in Kansas, possibly Goessel

**Entz, Abraham Isaak**

Wife **Agatha Thiessen**

**Abraham**

**Margaretha**

**Isaak**

**Jakob**

**Agathe**

**Maria**

**Aganetha**

**Johann**

Departed Hamburg and Le Havre on the *S S Holsatia*, arrived in New York 1 July 1874

Settled in Kansas

**Hiebert, David**

Wife **Sara Penner**

**Agatha**

**Sara**  
**Katharina**  
**Jakob**  
**Elisabeth**  
**Anna**

Departed Antwerp on the *S S Vaderland*, arrived Philadelphia 29 June 1877

Settled in Mountain Lake, Minnesota

**Hiebert (also called Huebert), Gerhard**

Wife **Susanna Enns**

**Jakob**  
**Elisabeth**  
**Gerhard**  
**David**  
**Susanna**

Departed Antwerp on the *S S Kenilworth*, arrived in New York 17 July 1876

Settled in Mountain Lake, Minnesota

**Hiebert (also called Huebert), Peter**

Wife **Anna Janzen**

**Peter**  
**Jacob**  
**Heinrich**  
**Nikolai (Nickolaus)**  
**Abraham**

Departed Hamburg and Le Havre on the *S S Holsatia*, arriving in New York 1 July 1874

Settled in Kansas

**Janzen, Cornelius**

(he changed his name to Jansen around this time)

Wife **Helena von Riesen**

**Margaretha**  
**Peter**  
**Anna**  
**Johann**  
**Helena**  
**Heinrich** (changed name to Cornelius about this time)  
**Anna von Riesen**

Deported from Russia, actually leaving the country by train from Odessa 30 May 1873,  
eventually landing in Quebec, Canada

**Lohrenz, Heinrich**

Wife **Katharina Wiebe**

**Katharina**  
**Jacob**  
**Maria**  
**Gertruda**



**Justina**

Departed Antwerp on the *S S Switzerland*, arriving in Philadelphia 24 June 1879  
Settled in Henderson, Nebraska

**Nickel, Abram**

Wife **Helena Bahnmann**

Migrated 1875, settling in Mountain Lake, Minnesota

**Quiring, Johann**

**Wilhelm**

**Adelgrunde**

**Johann**

**Margaretha**

**Rosalie (Rosa)**

Widower Johann with children boarded the *S S Frisia* and sailed Hamburg and Le Havre,  
landing in New York 22 July 1874

They settled in Kansas

**Quiring, Wilhelm**

Wife **Sara Sudermann**

**Abraham**

**Maria**

**Margaretha**

**Elisabeth**

Migrated, likely directly from Berdyansk, possibly in 1873, settling in Newton, Kansas

**Rempel, Johann**

Wife **Maria Thiessen**

**Helena**

**Maria**

**Anna**

**Elisabeth**

**Heinrich**

**Agatha**

**Johann**

**Katharina**

Departed Hamburg and Le Havre on the *S S Holsatia*, arriving in New York 1 July 1874

Daughter Aganetha was born 6 July 1874, likely still on the way

Settled in Kansas

**Rempel, Johann Peter**

Wife **Elisabeth Huebert**

**Johann**

**Jakob**

**Maria**

**Peter**

**Elisabeth**

Departed Hamburg and Le Havre on the *S S Holsatia*, arriving in New York 1 July 1874

Settled in Marion County, Kansas, likely Hillsboro

**Riesen, (von Riesen), Rudolf Hermann**

Wife **Katharina Friesen**

**Rudolf**

**Gertrude**

**Heinrich**

**Katharina**

**Agatha**

**Agnes**

**Johann**

**Friedrich**

Departed from Hamburg and Le Havre on the *S S Frisia*, landing in New York 29 May 1873

Settled in Hillsboro, Kansas

**Sudermann, Hermann W**

Wife **Elisabeth Ediger**

**Abraham**

**Maria**

**Anna**

**Sara**

**Hermann**

**Salomon**

Departed from Bremen aboard the *S S Nuernberg*, arriving in New York 26 May 1885

Settled in Newton, Kansas

**Sudermann, Elder Leonhard Abraham**

Wife **Maria Sudermann**

Foster daughter **Elise Jantzen**

Departed from Bremen aboard the *S S Main*, arriving in New York 21 August 1876

Eventually settled in Whitewater, Kansas

**Toews, Johann Heinrich**

Wife **Maria Rempel**

**Heinrich**

**Johann**

**Franz**

**Peter**

**Isbrand**

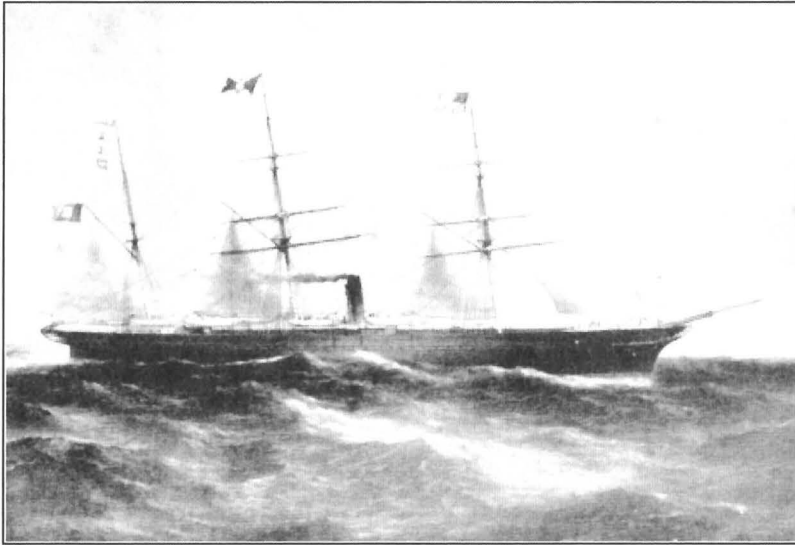
**Maria**

Immigrated to the USA, aboard the *S S Holsatia*, via Hamburg and Le Havre, landing in

New York 1 July 1874

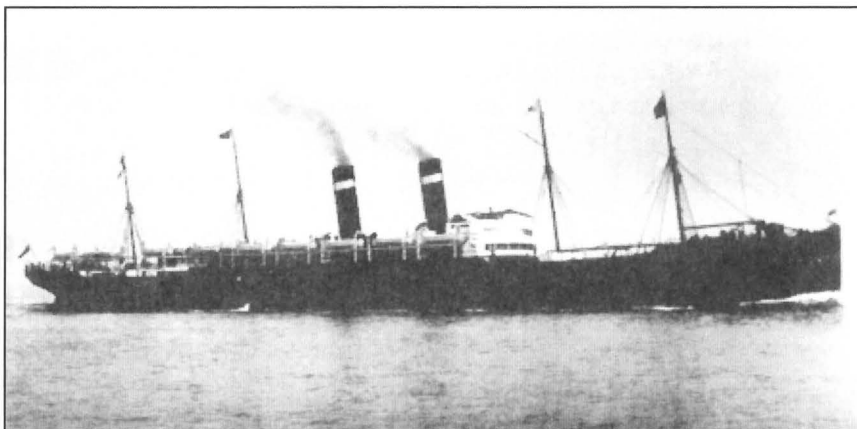
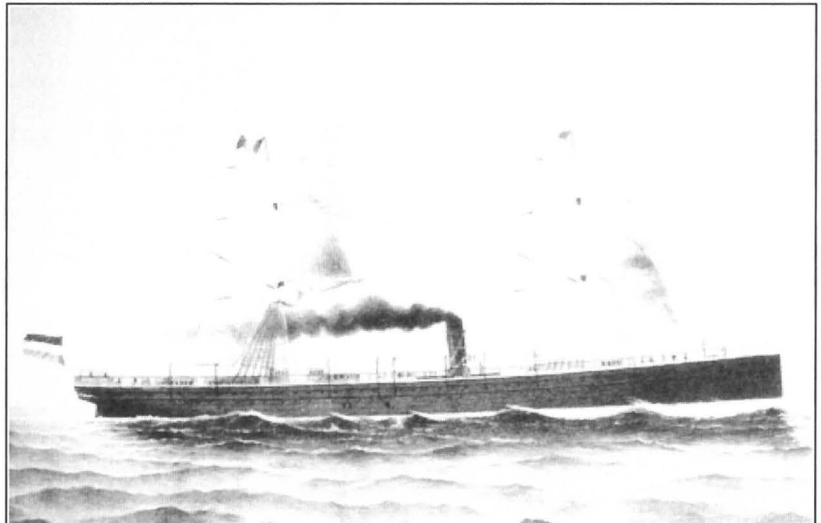
Settled in Kansas

## Ships which played a role in the 1870s migration to North America



*SS Homonia*, on which the delegates to North America, including Elder Leonhard Sudermann, returned to Europe, arriving in Hamburg on 5 September 1873. They survived a fierce storm at sea

*SS Holsatia* arrived in New York 1 July 1874 carrying at least four families from Berdyansk, the Jakob Enns, Abraham Entz, Johann Rempel and Johann Peter Rempel families, a total of 32 individuals



*SS Vaderland* arrived in Philadelphia 29 June 1877 carrying at least two families from Berdyansk, the Bernhard Buhler and David Hiebert (Huebert) families, a total of 15 individuals

## MENNONITE BUSINESSES

By 1852 there was a considerable number of small Mennonite business establishments in Berdyansk

Despite the obvious wealth of many of the Berdyansk Mennonites, very few, if any, contributed their fair share for the maintenance of the *Forsteidienst*. None are mentioned in the 1908 taxation list. It is hoped that there was some other system of taxation to correct this obvious omission.

### **Berdyansk Development Company** (actual specific name not known)

In 1882 a company (*Gesellschaft*) was formed in Berdyansk for the purpose of buying land, presumably because of an expanding Mennonite population. With land purchased by this means a couple (name not known) bought 150 dessiatines in Ogus-Tobe in the eastern Crimea. They had a windmill in Berdyansk which was not doing well, so they dismantled it, and with 7 pair of oxen took all their belongings and the mill to settle in Ogus-Tobe in May of 1883 (on the List of People called Mr and Mrs Y)

Others also moved from Berdyansk to Ogus-Tobe and possibly other villages, among them at least 4 relatives of the first mentioned family, and a Jakob Dick family

### **Berg, Jakob**

Owned windmill by 1852

Cabinet maker

### **Buhler, Jakob**

Owned flour mill by 1852

### **Classen, Bernhard**

Brick manufacturer by 1852

### **Claassen, Cornelius**

Owned flour mill by 1852

### **Der Botschafter**

Mennonite paper published twice a week, begun in 1905

Editors David H Epp and H A Ediger

At first printed in Ekaterinoslav, then likely in Berdyansk after mid 1907

In 1911 cost 5 rubles per year, 3 rubles for half a year, and 50 kopecs for a month

Ceased publication in late 1914 by government order

### **Doerksen, Jakob**

Business selling kitchen and clothes washing equipment

Advertised the Krauss System of washing machine in 1905

### **Dueck, Isaak**

Prosperous grain merchant, likely 1860-1900

### **Ediger, Abram Salomon**

Teacher at Rosenhof Estate 1861-1867

Then moved to Berdyansk to start a business

**Ediger Publishing House, Print Shop and Bookstore**

Owned by Heinrich A Ediger

In 1911, for example, *Mennonitisches Jahrbuch 1910*, published by Heinrich Dirks, sold for 70 kopecs, including handling and shipping

Ediger was also a bank director, a city councillor, and mayor of the city for a number of years

**Enns, Isaak**

Owned oil press by 1852

**Fast, David**

Owned flour mill by 1852

**Friesen, Isbrand Isbrand**

Owner of the first treadmill built in Berdyansk in 1840

Sold his treadmill during the Crimean War

**Friesen, J**

Wealthy owner of a large mill, probably in the 1870s and 1880s

**Grain Brokers in Berdyansk** (Listed by P M Friesen in 1910, p 696)

Jakob Sudermann

Gerhard and Isaak Dueck (Friesen spells their names Dyck)

Dietrich Guenther

Nikolai Wiens

**Guenther & Co**

Presumably owned by a Mr Guenther

A business selling rope made of sisal and manila

Advertised in *Christlicher Familienkalendar* in 1912

**Hiebert, David**

Owned a treadmill 1860

Built a steam-powered flour mill in 1869

**Janzen, Cornelius**

The most prominent of several grain merchants

Migrated to Canada in 1873 (was actually expelled from Russia), then to the USA

**John Greaves & Co Factory**

Owned by an English engineer, John E Greaves of Sheffield, England

Established in 1883 on land located along the north west edge of the German Quarter

Greaves purchased the Janzen house, which was east of the factory, as his residence

Produced agricultural machinery, using the name "Swallow"

Produced ploughs, seeders and reapers

In 1897 produced 4,464 reapers, the largest producer of reapers in all of Europe

At the time the factory covered 2 city blocks

While Greaves was not a Mennonite, he did have Mennonite employees

Peter Sudermann was one of the factory managers; he married Emilie, daughter of John Greaves

Jakob Sudermann, brother of Peter, was a travelling salesman for the "Swallow" brand of

implements produced by the factory; he married Amy Greaves, the niece of John Greaves

The factory was confiscated by the Communists and became known as Pervomaiskiy Zavod

(First of May Factory)

The factory buildings still exist today, although they are no longer in operation

**Matthias Agricultural Machinery Factory**

Established 1884 by the Matthias family

Manufactured ploughs, harrows, reapers, drills, threshing machines and wine presses

By 1912 called "Widow Matthias & Sons, the father having died

Employees: 1897-155, 1904-200, 1909-340, 1914-300

Yearly production: 1897-175,425 rubles, 1912-700,000 rubles

Not certain whether the owners were Mennonites or ethnic Germans

**Penner, Jakob**

In some type of business in 1852

**Rempel, Johann**

Owned windmill by 1852

**Rempel, Peter Peter**

Owned windmill by 1852

**Riesen (non Riesen), Rudolf**

Cabinet maker, likely 1850s

**Sudermann, Abraham Isaak**

Built and operated a treadmill by 1845

Wine merchant about 1860

**Sudermann, Abraham Jakob**

Manufactured and sold white wine, probably in the 1870s and 1880s

**Sudermann, Hermann** (not sure which Hermann Sudermann)

Grain merchant

**Sudermann, Isaak Jakob**

Grain merchant

Business failed about 1894

**Sudermann, Jakob Isaak**

Owned windmill by 1852

Miller, grain broker, wine merchant, estate owner

**Tokmak Railway**

An organizational meeting of the shareholders of the Tokmak Railway was held in Berdyansk

21 June 1911. Elected onto the executive were W W Fomin, Jakob P Wall, Johann P Wall, and P A Ediger, all of Berdyansk. W W Fomin was elected president, Jakob P Wall vice-president. That same day the first meeting of the executive was held.

Mennonite investors in the railway included H Ediger, P Ediger, H Janzen, Jakob P Wall and Johann P Wall, all of Berdyansk. Total investment capital was 1,750,000 rubles. It was felt that if the summer holiday season did not interfere with obtaining the necessary documentation from St Petersburg, work on the railway could begin in the autumn of 1911.

A general meeting of members of the Tokmak Railway Company Society was held on 7 February 1912. Good progress was being made in construction. A telephone line along the entire track, also to Berdyansk, was to be completed by April 1. Putting down

railway ties and track was to begin on July 1. Plans were being made to lengthen the line

**Wedel, Benjamin**

Watchmaker by 1852

**Wiebe, Jakob**

Operated a treadmill by 1852

**Wiens, Julius**

Merchant by 1852

**Wiens, Nikolai Johann**

Grain broker and merchant, starting about 1845

Owned at least 8 properties in Berdyansk

**Wiens and Janzen Rope Factory**

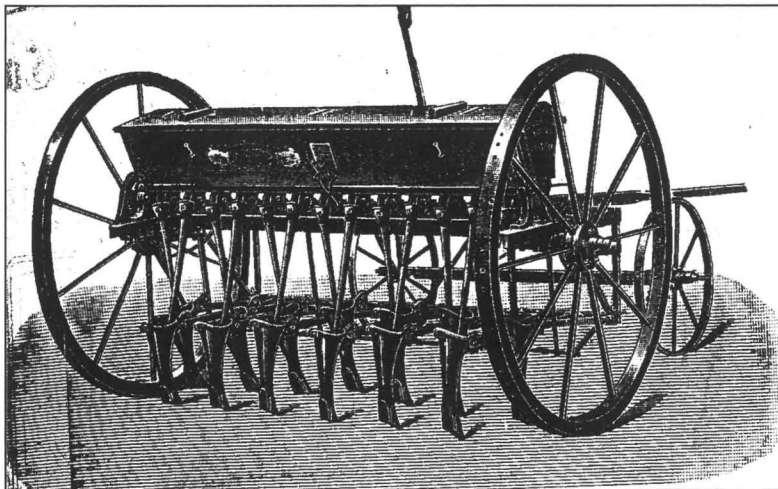
First owned by Mr D Wiens and Mr H Janzen

Later purchased by Peter Riediger

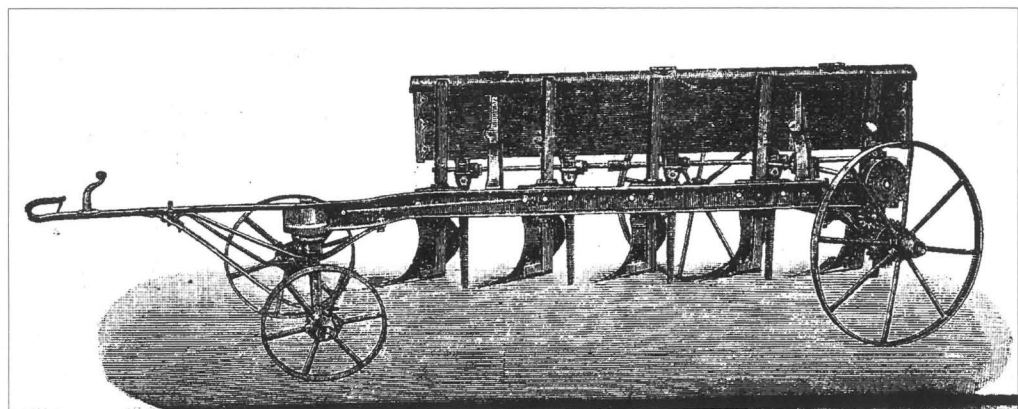




Builders of the Tokmak Railway: middle row l-r, first P Ediger of Berdyansk sixth A P Ediger, bank director in Berdyansk, seventh, former estate owner Johann Wall, who then moved to Berdyansk



Seeder/drill manufactured by "Widow Matthias & Sons"



Plough manufactured by "Widow Matthias & Sons"

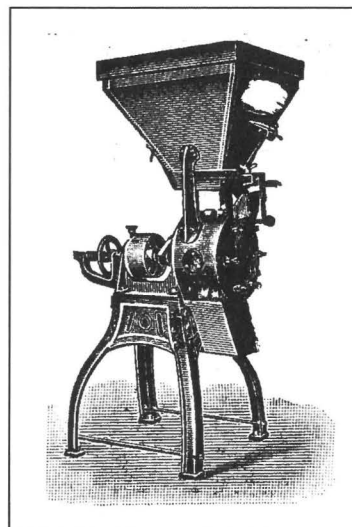
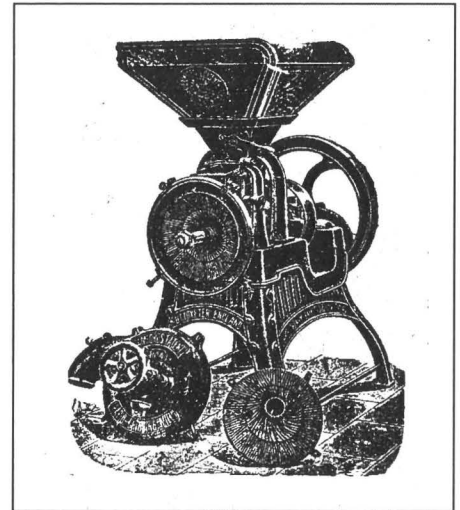
*Jakob Doerksen,*

*Ein gewaltiger Fortschritt*  
ist die  
**Waschmaschine**  
System „Krauss“  
D.R.G.M.



Für Küche und Waschhaus.

*Berdiansk, Taurien.*



Products sold by Jakob Doerksen



**Die Typographie**  
von  
**H. Ediger u. K.**  
**Verdjansk**

übernimmt die Ausführung jeglicher Art von Druckarbeiten in russischer, deutscher, französischer und griechischer Sprache. Die Typographie ist mit einer großen Auswahl neuer Typen versehen, außerdem wird die Druckmaschine sehr elektrisch betrieben. Einbände von stouten, elegant gebunden und alle sonstigen in das Buchdruckerhandwerk einschlagenden Arbeiten werden teilweise und auch einzeln ausgeführt. Mäßige Preise, saubere Arbeit und prompte Bedienung. In unserer Typographie wird bereits das 74te Jahr die deutsche Zeitung „Botschafter“ gedruckt.

Advertising in 1913

**Verdjansk**  
**Realschule**  
Begr. von P. P. Fast.  
Alle Rechte der Kronreal-  
schulen.  
Vorbereitungs- und I—VII Klassen.  
Aufnahmeexamen vom 15 Mai  
und 15. August.  
Bittschriften täglich.  
Adresse: [250]  
**Вердянскъ, реальное училище.**

Advertising 24 April 1910  
in *Friedensstimme*

# „Der Botschafter“

erscheint zweimal wöchentlich in Verdjansk.

Herausgeber Joh. Thiezen-Zekat., Redakteure D. G. Epp-Zekat. und H. A. Ediger-Verdjansk. **II Sechster Jahrgang. CC**

**Preis jährl. 5 Rbl., halb. 3 Rbl., monatl. 50 Kop.**

Der Botschafter bringt: Erbauliche Verrichtungen, vaterländische und politische Nachrichten widmet dem Leben und Streben der deutschen Ansiedler in Südrussland die allgrößte Aufmerksamkeit, behandelt in gezielten Artikeln Fragen der Hygiene, Landwirtschaft, Pädagogik usw., bringt im Feuilleton interessante Erzählungen und Schilderungen etc.

Der Botschafter zählt eine ganze Reihe der hervorragenden deutschen Männer Südrusslands in Stadt und Land zu seinen ständigen Mitarbeitern und wird gleichzeitig von einer großen Zahl gelegentlicher Mitarbeiter von nah und fern unterstützt.

Wenn Sie den „Botschafter“ noch nicht kennen, lassen Sie sich doch, bitte, kostenfrei Probenummern zusenden.

Adresse: \_\_\_\_\_  
Екатеринославъ, „Ботшафтеръ“, отет Вердянскъ, Тавр г „Ботшафтеръ“.

Der Botschafter advertising in *Christlicher Familienkalender* in 1911

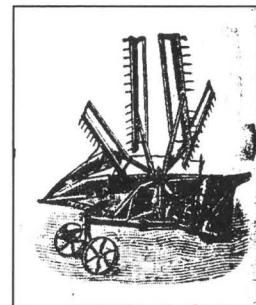
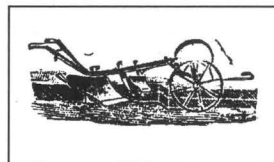
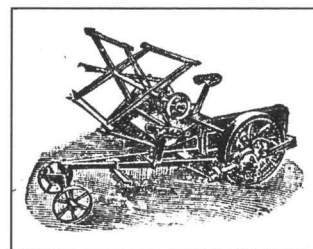
Höchste  Auszeichnung.

Maschinenfabrik und Stahlgießerei  
der Aktiengesellschaft

**John Greaves & Co.,**  
in Berdjansk.

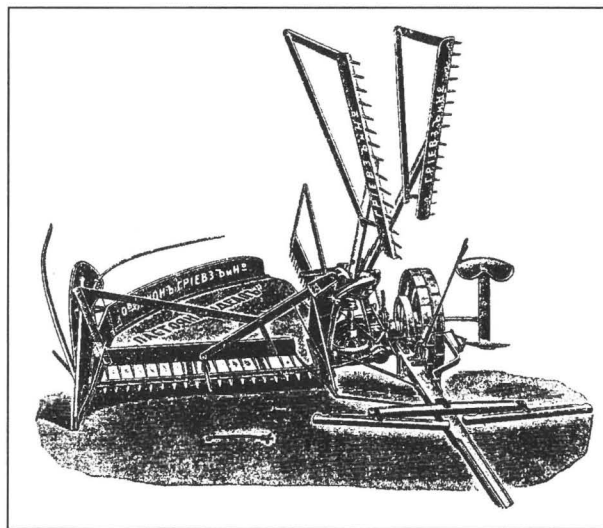


John Greaves & Co factory

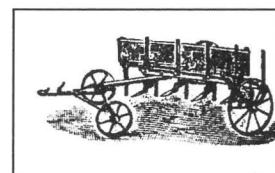


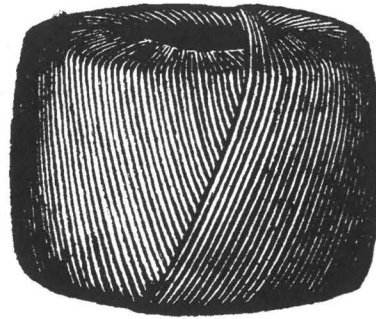
John Greaves & Co  
products

Price lists available  
gratis



Grass mower (*Grass-Mäehmaschine*)





Bindegarn-Spinnerei  
**D. Wiens &  
S. Janzen**  
Berdjansk.

Die Bindegarnfabrik  
**- Günther & Co. -**  
Berdjansk (Taurien),  
liefert Sisal- und Manilaspagat  
aus gutem Rohmaterial.

Manufaktur-Handlung  
**Tschernow & Kostow,**  
Berdjansk, <sup>gegenüber</sup> dem Den'mal

Tuch-, Wollen-, Seiden-, Leinen- und  
Baumwollstoffe in großer Auswahl.  
Wöchentlich Empfang von Neuheiten.  
Feste Preise. Auf die Güte der Waren  
wird besondere Aufmerksamkeit ge-  
richtet.

## BERDYANSK REGION ESTATES

There were a number of estates near Berdyansk, of course to the north of the city. A number of people who lived in Berdyansk actually also owned estates. Certainly estate families, even beyond the immediate region, married into Berdyansk families. There was considerable intermarriage with the Taschtschenak estate region, which was near Melitopol. Isbrand Isbrand Friesen of the city of Berdyansk, was for a time chairman of the Berdyansk Estate Owners Association.

### **Bergmann(Jakob P)**

Address: Nikolaidorf

Owned by Jakob Peter Bergmann

225 dess

### **Dick (David J) Apanlee**

Owned by David Jakob Dick and Katharina Schmidt

In 1908 listed at 8,050 dess

### **Dirks (Johann J)**

Address: Waldheim, Molotschna

Owned by Johann Johann Dirks

200 dess

### **Driedger (Kornelius I)**

Address: Gnadenthal, Molotschna

Owned by Kornelius Isaak Driedger

72 dess

### **Janzen (Cornelius)**

Janzen leased a large tract of land 45 verst from Berdyansk about 1866

Estate was established, a house being built

Used it to raise cattle

Managed by a faithful Russian overseer, Luke Petrovitch

Had some difficulty selling it when they immigrated in 1873

### **Matthies (Abraham A)**

Address: Halbstadt, Molotschna, situated near Ackerman

Owned by Abraham Abraham Matthies, then by 1908 by his heirs

In 1911 one of the heirs was likely J F Matthies

### **Schoenau**

Owned by W W Wiens

### **Sudermann (Abraham J)**

Owned by Abraham Jakob Sudermann

### **Steinbach**

According to 1908 Forstei List consisted of at least 6 estates

Regehr, Johann David.....60 dess

Schmidt, Nikolai Heinrich.....60 dess

Schmidt, Nikolai Peter.....1,121 dess  
 Schmidt, Peter and Nikolai.....11,887 dess  
     Some of this land was likely also in other places, not just Steinbach region  
 Schmidt, Peter Peter.....350 dess  
 Wiens, Sarah David (widow).....61 dess  
     Total area.....13,539 dess

**Sudermann (Jakob J) Apanlee**

Owned by Jakob Jakob Sudermann

In 1908 6,002 dess

**Sudermann (Leonard)**

Owned by Leonhard Jakob Sudermann

689 dess

**Wiens (Jakob J)**

Address: Mariawohl, Molotschna

Owned by Jakob Jakob Wiens



## CORNELIUS JANZEN

(he changed the spelling of his name to Jansen about 1874)  
(1822-1894)

Cornelius Janzen was born 2 July 1822 in Tiegenhof, West Prussia. His parents were Daniel Janzen and Anna Buhler. They were both baptized members of the Tiegenhof Mennonite Church. The Janzens had at least one other child, Johanna, born 10 November 1823. She, in time, married Peter Penner of Petershagen, West Prussia.

Father Daniel was a textile maker and merchant in Tiegenhof. The young Cornelius worked



Cornelius Janzen (1822-1894)

in the store of his father, often having to fill and light the long tobacco pipes of the customers. Cornelius probably attended the village school in Tiegenhof; this was likely his only formal education.

When Cornelius was ten his mother died. It is not known when his father died. From the time of his mother's death Cornelius lived with his uncle, Gerhard Penner. Gerhard was a businessman, and later elder of the Heubuden congregation. He helped train the young Cornelius in various aspects of work as a merchant. There were rumours that as a young man Cornelius may have been a bit of a dandy. He "was fond of dancing and a great favourite of the ladies."

Cornelius was baptized, likely at the usual age of 21 or 22, by Elder Peter Regier of the Tiegenhof congregation. He, together with some friends, visited South Russia, travelling on horseback. During this trip he visited Berdyansk, where he may have had acquaintances from Prussia, such as the Sudermanns. He observed that the city

had advantages as a seaport, especially for the export of grain.

Cornelius married Helena von Riesen on 4 May 1848 in Schidlitz, a suburb of Danzig. She was born on 1 December 1822, in that same village. Her father, Peter von Riesen, was a miller, but also dealt with other commodities. Peter's parents and all his younger siblings had migrated to South Russia in 1804, most of them later joining the *Kleine Gemeinde*. Helena's mother, the second of three wives of Peter, was Margaretha Harder of Marienburg. She was related to Leonhard Sudermann, who later was elder of the Mennonite Church in Berdyansk.

The newly married couple probably lived in Schidlitz for a time, with Helena's younger brothers and a sister. Children born into the Janzen family were:

1. Margaretha - born 12 February 1849 in Schidlitz, West Prussia, lived in Berdyansk when her parents moved there, immigrated to Canada with her parents in 1873, then to the USA in 1874, kept a very careful diary, died 19 January 1875 at Mount Pleasant, Iowa, of "inflammatory rheumatism" with paralysis (possibly poliomyelitis?)
2. Peter - born 21 March 1852 in Berdyansk, immigrated to Canada with parents in 1873,

then to USA in 1874, played an increasing role helping new arrivals, he and brother Johann initially settled on the family ranch near Beatrice, Nebraska, Peter married Gertrude Penner 4 May 1877, 7 children, developed the ranch into a large scale sheep farm, became representative for railroads, founded town of Jansen and organized the Jansen bank, involved in Republican Party, delegate to conventions, elected to Nebraska State legislature, appointed by President McKinley to represent the USA at the World's Fair in Paris in 1900, 1909 sold ranch and moved to Beatrice, elected to Nebraska State Senate in 1910, died 6 June 1923

3. Anna - born 23 March 1856 in West Prussia, likely Wickerau, migrated to Berdyansk with parents, immigrated to Canada with parents in 1873 then to USA in 1874, married Aron Claassen, a recent immigrant from Prussia on 9 January 1879, 9 children, the first 2 dying in infancy, lived on farm 5 miles west of Beatrice, died 17 October 1924
4. Johann - born 16 October 1857 in Berdyansk, immigrated with parents to Canada in 1873 then to USA in 1874, helped brother Peter build up the ranch near Beatrice, married Albertine Penner 24 August 1882, for a time lived on and managed the ranch, 7 children, fire in stable killed 11 horses in March 1883, early in the century moved to Quill Lake, Saskatchewan, farm and ranch, died 10 February 1932
5. Helena - born 14 November 1858 in Berdyansk, immigrated with parents to Canada in 1873 then to USA in 1874, never married, helped in household until after death of parents, had teaching certificate but never taught, active in Sunday School and city mission work, hobby painting china, 1917 moved to Pasadena, died 9 November 1937
6. Heinrich (Cornelius Jr) - born 30 April 1863 in Berdyansk, immigrated with parents to Canada 1873 then to USA 1874, changed name to Cornelius Jr about this time, completed high school and various other courses, teaching school by 1882, attended Haverford College, taught German and Greek in Beatrice High School 1883-84, interest in politics and culture, married Christine Fossler of Lincoln, Nebraska, both taught school in Los Angeles, died 22 August 1954

Wife Helena's sister, Anna von Riesen, lived with the Janzens during her life time, staying with them wherever they lived for nearly 50 years. Expenses involved were equitably divided throughout the entire period.

Cornelius and Helena were later described by their son Peter. Cornelius was of medium height, slim and erect, with expressive mobile features and a rather prominent nose and a high forehead. He had blue eyes. He had a delightful sense of humour, enjoyed debate, having powerful logic and intricate reasoning, and was a good chess player. He was a great reader, loved music, sang well and played the flute. He was fond of children, as well as horses and dogs. He gave up smoking when middle-aged, and then encouraged others to follow his example. He was personally very neat, his clothes always being well brushed. In Russia he wore a silk hat on Sundays and at other special occasions.

Helena was tall, in her younger years tending to stoutness. She was said to have been a handsome woman. She had a good common sense, perhaps having a better business sense than her husband. She was forceful, and generally had her own way, and was inclined to be suspicious. She was a great student of the Bible, but often had her own unorthodox interpretations. She made her

children read the scriptures if they wanted to or not. Punishment for misdeeds often took the form of reading portions of the Bible out loud, the gravity of the sin determining the length of the passage. Psalm 119 was Peter's sentence for lying on one occasion.

The Janzen family was obviously wealthy enough to have a number of servants. On one occasion they brought a German man-servant with them from Prussia, who, as it turns out, was not satisfactory. Margaretha and Peter had a governess named Sophia, who had special training in Kaisereswerth, Germany. They found that Russian servants were often unreliable.

In June of 1850 the Janzen family moved from West Prussia to Berdyansk. It is not certain why they moved; it could have been for economic reasons, or possibly because of the strong family ties - even though some of them had moved to Russia more than 40 years previously. They went by carriage, accompanied by Helena's sister Anna and the youngest brother Johannes. Heinrich, an elder brother, had preceded them in the move and Abraham seems to have remained in Schidlitz.

By the end of July the Janzens reached Berdyansk, likely having stopped in the Molotschna on the way. They bought a *Wirtschaft* in Berdyansk, presumably a house in the city, paying in five equal parts: Cornelius, Helena, sister Anna, and brothers Johannes and Abraham (who was still in



The Cornelius Janzen home

Prussia, but planned to move). While the house was being built they lived with Helena's eldest brother Heinrich until 22 July 1851; they then moved into their own house. During this time Cornelius was likely involved in agriculture and grain sales. Cornelius seems to have owned a grain warehouse which he rented to Jakob Buhler in September 1852.

For some reason the Janzens left Berdyansk in the autumn of 1852, perhaps to deal with financial matters in Danzig. Mortgages and bonds were owed, and the legacy of father-in-law Peter von Riesen was not yet settled. They arrived back in Danzig 18 November 1852 and looked up all their old friends. They lived in Schidlitz together with Helena's brother Abraham. In their accounts there is no evidence of specific business activity, but they did travel to various places in the region. Cornelius raised some money from his Prussian friends to help build a church in Berdyansk.

Somewhat surprisingly Cornelius bought a farm in Wickerau, near Elbing, West Prussia, in the autumn of 1855. Then, again for reasons that are not entirely clear, Cornelius sold the newly acquired farm to Johannes, younger brother of Helena, and headed back to Berdyansk in the summer of 1856. It may have been that they awaited the conclusion of the Crimean War. Arriving in the city Cornelius "set about repairing the damage done to the buildings by the ravages of war and neglect and re-establish the grain business." Berdyansk had been bombarded by British ships during the Crimean War, at least one cannon ball hitting a Janzen warehouse. During the next number of years the accounts show a considerable amount of money being spent on repairs and new construction. The December 1859 expense of 2,000 silver rubles was mainly for a new house.

Janzen formed partnerships in his grain business. Abraham Matthies, who had a large store in the village of Rudnerweide, and Jakob Enns of Halbstadt bought grain from farmers in the

Molotschna and shipped it to Berdyansk, where it was stored in the Janzen granaries until it could be sold at a good price. The grain was brought to Berdyansk in wagons pulled by slowly moving oxen. Wheat was the commonest grain sold, much of it being exported to England, although Janzen

also dealt with oats, barley, linseed and rapeseed. A number of labourers were required to carry the sacks of grain from the wagons to the granaries, then from the granaries to the ships. Profits were shared by the three partners, although a 2% commission went largely to the broker (Janzen).

The place where the Janzens erected their home and business was on a large lot, consisting of several dessiatines, sloping up a gradual elevation. The sloping portion was planted with grapes; a summer house was built where the family had coffee on festive occasions. There was a beautiful view of the harbour from the crest of the hill.

About 1866 Cornelius seemed to be farming as an added sideline. He leased a large tract of land about 45 verst from Berdyansk, where an estate was established, using it to raise cattle. A house was built on the property. It was managed by a faithful Russian overseer, Luke Petrovitch.

Cornelius never became a Russian citizen, retaining his Prussian

status. He did prefer Russia to Prussia because he could live there "without many restrictions in the economic and social areas." He basically disliked and distrusted governments that might in any way impinge on what he considered to be his freedom. While not being dedicated enough to one country to be a citizen, he was, however, interested in international politics. He served as consul for Prussia for a number of years, and also for Mecklenburg Schwerin. It is not certain exactly when he held these posts, since there is conflicting evidence as to specific dates.

The Janzens had frequent contact with the British, especially through the consuls in Berdyansk. Helena Janzen was initially not willing to move into their new house when they returned from Danzig because she felt it was incompatible with a simple lifestyle. The house was therefore rented to the British Consul Cumberbatch. The Janzens thereby made connections with the British



The Cornelius Janzen family at their home in Berdyansk about 1870. back row l to r Peter, Anna von Riesen, Heinrich, Mother Helena, Cornelius, Margaretha, front row Anna, Johann, Helena



community which would later prove to be helpful; this also started them on the path of learning English. William Melville, a Scottish Presbyterian, visited Berdyansk on business. He was also involved with the British and Foreign Bible Society. Through him Janzen became interested in the distribution of scriptures and other Christian literature. This included Bibles and other literature in German, Russian, Bulgarian, French and even Hebrew. From 1864 until he left Russia in the spring of 1873 Cornelius tabulated that he had distributed Christian literature worth 1,880 silver rubles.

Religious convictions came to Cornelius gradually. Eduard Wuest influenced him to some degree, although he did not accept the theatrical extremes, while he still retained the strength of Mennonite theology. In time he rejected the use of tobacco, and possibly because of the deaths of close relatives due to drink, banished alcohol from his table. Cornelius became, supported by his wife, an ardent proponent of the cause of temperance.

The Janzen home had an extensive library, which included staunch Mennonite/Anabaptist books such as *Fundament-Buch* by Menno Simons, but also John Milton's *Das Verlorene Paradies* (*Paradise Lost*). In the early 1870s they received both German and English Christian magazines. Pure high German was spoken in the home, the children likely attending the Mennonite elementary school, where David Goerz taught from 1869-1873; they were also trained by governesses. There were several servants in the home, but even so the children worked; the girls, for instance, learned how to milk cows. Besides the six Janzen children, two children of Helena's brother Abraham (their parents died quite early) were largely educated in the Janzen home. Heinrich and Anna von Riesen were about the same age as the oldest Janzen children.

In October of 1867 two English Quakers appeared in Berdyansk and came into contact with Cornelius, Thomas Harvey of Leeds and Isaac Robson of Huddersfield. He hosted them in his own home, then accompanied them on a trip through various Mennonite colonies as well as Molokan villages. He tried to have a letter which they wrote back to him printed in Odessa, but the Russian censors refused to allow this. The censors did not appreciate the admonition to actively evangelize their Russian neighbours. This may have represented a turning point in the life of Cornelius. He no longer considered Russia to be a suitable long-term home.

The question of the Mennonite non-resistant status was brewing in Russia with the planned reorganization of the military after the disaster of the Crimean War - universal draft was definitely a strong possibility. In Prussia the Mennonites were given the option of accepting non-combatant military service or of leaving the country. A number had already emigrated to Russia. Two delegates, Elder Wilhelm Ewert of Ober-Nessau and Peter Dyck of Rosenort, toured Russia in 1870, also stopping in Berdyansk. They conferred with Leonhard Sudermann and Cornelius Janzen, and were strongly advised to consider America instead. Cornelius had obtained much information about the United States and became persuaded that "America was the country where the Mennonites could live in full freedom."

Once it was confirmed that the rumours of universal military service in Russia was indeed planned by the government, a number of conferences were held, on 18 December 1870 and 8 January 1871. Delegations were sent to St Petersburg to obtain additional information. In February of 1871, for example, representatives from various colonies travelled to the capital, Leonhard Sudermann heading the Molotschna contingent. They saw many high officials, although not the Czar, and left feeling that they had accomplished something. One delegation even tried to see the Czar at his holiday resort in the Crimea, but again had to be satisfied with various officials in his stead.

From that time on Cornelius seems to have been very active in the promotion of immigration to America. He gathered information on the conditions in America, sought to influence his brethren in Russia and West Prussia and contacted government officials, especially those of Canada and the United States. This began as a one-man campaign, first of all regarding his own family, but in time expanded to include a massive voluntary migration of thousands of Mennonites. Gathering information included dealing with the appropriate government authorities, but also contacting Mennonites who already lived in America, such as John F Funk of Elkhart, Indiana.

During this time Janzen tried to publicize the results of his enquiries. Starting with hand duplicated notes he eventually chose to print pamphlets. For much of this work he used the services of his nephew Heinrich von Riesen in Danzig; strict censorship in Russia would have made it impossible to have them printed in that country. Some of the pamphlets published were:

*Sammlung von Notizen Ueber America*

*Gedanken englischer und deutscher Friedensfreunde*

*Gedanken ueber die Pflichten der Christen*

*Gedanken ueber den indirekten Militaerdienst*

*Ausschluss der American Paper als gegen Krieg zeugend*

*Gedanken ueber Religionsfreiheit*

*Adressen an die Christenheit*

These were all published at the authour's expense, the first six in 1872, the last one in 1873. The third and fourth pamphlets were also translated into English.

Wilhelm Hespeler, representative of the Canadian government, visited Berdyansk, speaking particularly with Janzen, in late July 1872. As a whole, however, Canada needed to work through the British consular service, since it had no officials of its own in the region. As a result of Hespeler's visit a meeting was held regarding emigration in Berdyansk on 1 August 1872, starting in the home of Elder Leonhard Sudermann in the afternoon, then continuing on into the night at the Janzen residence; further discussions were held on 22-25 September, also involving Bernhard Buhler.

There was, as could be expected, opposition to the views expressed by Janzen. Some felt that accommodation with the Russian government could be accomplished. Janzen maintained that the Mennonites had no option but to leave. He insisted that "the only testimony we can give is to migrate like our fathers, and that I will do, my Lord and Saviour helping me..." Cornelius spent the first months of 1873 preparing for emigration. He had been selling his house, garden and stables as early as August of 1872, but his estate lands proved somewhat more difficult to dispose of.

On 27 March 1873 a uniformed officer accompanied by a soldier presented Cornelius with an expulsion order. Janzen and Wilhelm Loewens, Prussian subjects, "who were spreading rumours and false ideas about the condition of the Mennonites and the immigration to America" were to leave the country and were prohibited from ever returning to Russia. Janzen was photographed, having to pay for the 12 copies of his likeness, which then were sent by Imperial command to various border inspection posts. After negotiations the time of departure was changed from the initial one week to two months to allow him time to settle his affairs. It is thought that the pamphlets that Cornelius wrote and distributed may have been the trigger to the expulsion order. A number of them had only his initials, but at least one included his full name.

An auction sale was held May 15-18. Money was transferred to Germany via a bank in

Odessa. Early Saturday morning, 26 May 1873, the Janzens departed from their spacious Berdyansk home. At 5 AM a parting prayer was offered, the twenty-fifth Psalm was read and the family left for the harbour. They set sail on the ship *S S Mydridat*.

Leaving Berdyansk were Cornelius, wife Helena, children Margaretha, Peter, Anna, Johann, Helena, Heinrich and Anna von Riesen. They travelled via Kerch to Sevastopol, then to Odessa. They disembarked in Odessa, stayed the night at the Hotel London, then on May 30 boarded a train which took them through Austria-Hungary, Poland, into Germany and finally to Danzig. Friends and relatives gave them a rousing welcome. They stayed with Johann von Riesen, who had returned from Berdyansk and purchased a farm near Danzig. July 15 they again boarded a train heading for Berlin, finally after some sightseeing in Berlin, reaching Hamburg on July 19. At 10 PM on July 22, aboard the *S S Huddersfield* they set sail for England. There they briefly visited their Quaker friends, then on July 31 boarded the *S S Circassian* of the Allen Line and began the long voyage across the North Atlantic to Canada. They even enjoyed seeing icebergs for a few days, although Anna von Riesen seems to have been troubled by sea-sickness for a considerable portion of the trip.

The family disembarked at Quebec 10 August 1873; they had with them 47 pieces of baggage, one of which was the dowry chest of daughter Anna. They then travelled by train via Toronto to Berlin (now Kitchener), Ontario. There they stayed in the spacious *Hinterhaus* of Jacob Y Schantz. Cornelius and son Peter almost immediately travelled to New York to meet the delegates who had been sent by the Russian Mennonites to explore the North American option. They were disappointed to see only a number of the representatives, but did briefly confer with Leonhard Sudermann (friend of Cornelius from Berdyansk), Wilhelm Ewert and Jakob Buller. Cornelius and Peter then went on to Elkhart, Indiana, to Newton, Kansas and to Chicago. They spoke to bankers, railroad agents as well as Mennonite leaders, and inspected tracts of land. It seems that some of the 12 delegates, and also the Janzens, had determined that they would settle in the United States despite the absence of assurance of exemption from military service or the possibility of settling in compact blocks of land. Having returned to Berlin for less than a month Cornelius and Peter again set out for the United States meeting with various Mennonites as well as politicians, including President Ulysses S Grant. Petitions were sent to various government committees as well as Congress regarding Mennonite concerns. It appears that the Canadian government was willing to make exceptions; the United States was not.

It does not appear to be mentioned specifically, but sometime in the migration to North America, Cornelius changed the spelling of the family name from Janzen to Jansen. Perhaps it was in the family genes to change spellings. His father had already changed the spelling from Jantzen to Janzen. Also during the time of the migration the name of the youngest son was changed from Heinrich to Cornelius Jr.

Cornelius expended much time and effort to help people with their migration, both in Russia and after they had landed in North America. He took many a trip to greet people as they arrived in the New World as exemplified by New York. He was also very active in soliciting aid for Mennonite families who were in need of financial assistance to migrate and to establish homes in either the United States or Canada. He even contacted the Quaker friends in England, who sent funds labelled specifically to help those who had already reached America.

Despite roadblocks put in the way by the Russian government, at least 5,000 Mennonites migrated from Russia to Manitoba, Kansas, Dakota, Nebraska and other western states in 1874.



Expected emigration for 1875 was roughly the same - about 1,000 families, approximately 5,000 people. Eventually the total number would reach 18,000 people, 10,000 to the USA, 8,000 to Canada. A Mennonite Board of Guardians was elected 7 November 1873; while Cornelius was not on the Board, he did whatever he could to assist them.

The Janzen family in the meantime continued to live in the four-room *Hinterhaus* of the Schantz yard. Cooking facilities were primitive; on October 6, after almost two months, they ate their first own prepared meal, *Rindsuppe*. October 13 they slept on real bedsteads; until then they had used mattresses on the floor. Cornelius had purchased two bedsteads for \$1.60.

The Janzen family certainly had adjustments to make in their new environment. No servants - even the president of the United States had done manual labour in his youth. Officials did not wear uniforms with gold braid and did not have guards. People greeting each other left their hats on, and even kept them on when they went into the church building. Entertainment in Berlin was scarce, activities consisting mainly of attending church, Sunday School or revival meetings. The Janzen family attended all the different churches in Berlin, most preferring the Methodist.

In time, probably for various reasons, among which were inadequate housing, lack of good schools for the children, absence of intimate friends and what he considered to be severe winters, Cornelius was looking to move south. He cited "reasons of health, for a more southern climate." He was to find out, however, that his lumbago did not depend on the weather. Cornelius and Peter, in their travels, found a suitable place at Mount Pleasant, Iowa. Peter, Anna, Anna von Riesen and Barry, a large Newfoundland family dog, left Berlin for their new home 1 June 1874, followed by the rest of the family on June 10 or 11. Cornelius, in the meantime, nursed his backache, which made it difficult for him to walk. By July 13 he recovered sufficiently so that he and Peter could continue the work of greeting new Russian Mennonites arriving in New York. Son Peter was playing an increasing role, for example accompanying a recently arrived group to inspect available lands in Kansas and Nebraska. Among the immigrants were Heinrich and Anna von Riesen, who landed in New York on 7 August 1874. At last the Janzens had some close relatives and friends on their side of the ocean.

Daughter Margaretha died of "inflammatory rheumatism" associated with some paralysis (possibly poliomyelitis?) on 19 January 1875. She was a hard worker, and had faithfully kept a diary over the years. Her father probably felt the loss most keenly.

Cornelius continued to be actively involved in the immigration through 1875 and 1876, and still carried on an extensive correspondence with Prussian and Russian Mennonites. He rationalized that immigration was a witness for peace; even Christians without children could witness for peace by immigration, using the underlying principle of protesting military service. In his extensive travels Cornelius had inspected the available land in various states and provinces and came to feel that Nebraska was by far the preferred haven, certainly preferred over hot, dry Kansas and cold Manitoba.

The Janzen children attributed their father's severe headaches and generally deteriorating health to his continued occupation with a heavy correspondence. But the Janzens were still looking for a permanent home; they finally decided on Beatrice, Nebraska, where they could establish a ranch. In the spring of 1875 Cornelius with sons Peter and Johann went to the newly purchased land in Jefferson County. They selected a building site, planned sheep sheds, corrals and other establishments. During the first few years Peter and Johann worked on the ranch for their father, but sharing in the profits. In January of 1876 they sheared their first crop of wool from 1,500 sheep and

500 lambs. At 25¢ a pound the Janzens realized a considerable profit. Their enterprise was also diversified, growing winter wheat, corn and oats, as well as raising registered cattle.

The family left their Mount Pleasant home 16 November 1876, and spent several months, including Christmas, with Peter and Johann on the ranch. They then moved to Beatrice, a town 18 miles from the ranch, in the spring of 1877. They continually improved on their town house, building a porch and some other additions and improving the bathhouse. They also enlarged the property by buying adjoining lots. Cornelius frequently visited the ranch, finding it to be a place for real relaxation from his immigration work.

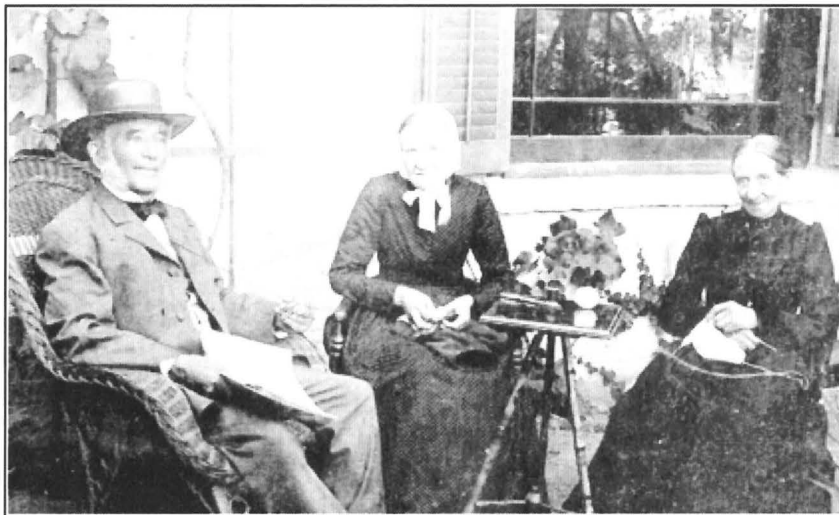


Entertaining family and friends in their Beatrice home

Peter and Johann were by now entrusted with the management of the ranch. When Peter married Gertrude Penner 24 February 1877, the young couple moved onto the ranch. Johann married Albertine Penner 24 August 1882, so the two couples lived together on the ranch for a time, then Peter and Gertrude moved to their own farm, leaving Johann as the ranch manager.

In Beatrice the Janzen family tended to go to the Mennonite service Sunday mornings, but in the evenings they often went to other churches. It was planned to build a new Mennonite church in Beatrice, actually four miles west of town. The congregation decided to "tax" the members according to the amount of land they owned. Cornelius disagreed, claiming that it was unbiblical

to follow any idea but his own. Funding should be completely by voluntary donation. The country church was nonetheless built in 1879, but unfortunately burned down December 21 of that year. It was decided to rebuild despite what could have been thought of as a bad omen. In the meantime church services were held on alternate Sundays in the spacious homes of Cornelius Janzen and J G Wiebe.



Cornelius and Helena Janzen with Anna von Riesen at their home in Beatrice, Nebraska

The Janzens seemed to be, above all else, absorbed in

living and promoting the Christian way of life as they interpreted it. Cornelius still helped and advised newcomers from Prussia and Russia. Elder Jacob A Wiebe later wrote, "We were in need of oxen and plows to break the prairie sod, then our good friend Cornelius Janzen, known to all as Consul Janzen, loaned us one thousand dollars." His advice was not universally appreciated, however, one Prussian immigrant asking "*Sind Sie denn allwissend?*" (Do you think you know everything?). The Janzens were also active in the temperance movement and in distributing Christian literature.

In time the main migration from Russia and Prussia to North America was completed. The Mennonite Board of Guardians was taking care of what immigration projects were left. Cornelius spent much of his time reading, attending church services, going to lectures and temperance meetings, visiting the sick, helping the needy and writing letters to his many friends. His health gradually deteriorated; he still had his lumbago, pains in his hips and frequent headaches. He died at 1:30 AM on 14 December 1894 at the age of 72 years.

The funeral of Cornelius Janzen was held two days later, on December 16. A preliminary service was held in the family home, where Elder Gerhard Penner spoke in German, Elder Heinrich Yother in English. The funeral procession of nearly one hundred vehicles then wended its way to the Beatrice country church. Many friends and neighbours wanted to pay their last measure of respect to the man who had meant so much to them. J H Zimmermann gave the funeral oration in the church service, the pallbearers carried the casket to the cemetery where the body of Cornelius Janzen was lowered to its final resting place. An evening service was held in the family home, Elder Leonhard Sudermann and Isaac Peters presiding.

Wife Helena Janzen lived three more years. She died 2 December 1897 and was buried by the side of her husband. Anna von Riesen died half a year later, on 28 June 1898.

Surprisingly, the only published obituary of Cornelius was a brief 18-line review of his life in the *Mennonitische Rundschau*, an article copied from the *Beatrice Post*. In the *Post* it was followed by a 17- line report on crops from Jansen, Nebraska.

It is difficult to evaluate the motives which were the main-spring of the self-appointed work of Cornelius Janzen. He attributed it to strong religious principles, but it does seem that an irrepressible sense of adventure, a sense of wanting to explore and take advantage of every economic opportunity and a sense of wanting to function totally without hindrance by either church or government were equally important to him. There is no doubt, however, that without his determined and tireless efforts the migration of the 1870s may not have been as extensive or as successful as it was.

#### Sources:

Hiebert, Clarence, *Brothers in Deed to Brothers in Need*, Faith and Life Press, Newton, Kansas, 1974, p 293

Jansen, Peter, *Memoirs of Peter Jansen: The Record of a Busy Life*, self-published, Beatrice, Nebraska, 1921, many pages

This book lists Cornelius Janzen's date of birth as 6 July 1823

- Leibrandt, Georg, The Emigration of German Mennonites from Russia to the United States and Canada in 1873-1880, *Mennonite Quarterly Review*, Part I, October 1932, pp 209-210; Part II, January 1933, p 24
- Mennonite Encyclopedia*, Vol III, pp 91-92
- Mennonitische Rundschau*
- Obituary: 26 December 1894, p 1
- Report: Elder Jacob A Wiebe, 26 June 1912, p 4
- Mennonitisches Lexikon*, Band II, p 391
- Reimer, Gustav E and Gaeddert, G R, *Exiled by the Czar: Cornelius Jansen and the Great Mennonite Migration, 1874*, Mennonite Publication Office, Newton, Kansas, 1956, many pages
- Smith, C Henry, *The Coming of the Russian Mennonites*, Mennonite Book Concern, Berne, Indiana, 1927, many pages, including 51, 101, 121

**ELDER LEONHARD ABRAHAM SUDERMANN**  
(1821 - 1900)

(Using his autobiography published post-humously in the *Mennonitische Rundschau* as the principle framework but certainly not the only source of information. In some ways the articles are almost as interesting for what they do not mention as for what they do include. The German language used is complex and convoluted, and often vague or indirect. One often wishes that he had used more specific names; now we frequently have to guess whom he is referring to.)

Leonhard Abraham Sudermann was born 21 April 1821 in Goldschaar Heubuden, just west of Marienburg, West Prussia. He was the youngest of eleven children of Abraham Sudermann and his second wife Anna von Riesen.

The Sudermanns owned a small property, two Hufen (33 hectares or 81.5 acres), on which his father, when he died, had lived for fifty years. Leonhard's birth fell at a time when his parents were still labouring under the difficult circumstances brought on by the Napoleonic Wars - many people in the area had suffered. Added to this, one year before his birth (1820) the family home and business buildings had burned down. That made it difficult for the parents but benefitted the children - they from childhood on had learned to be frugal. These experiences drove them to prayer and to trusting in God.

At the age of seven Leonhard went to a private school which had been established by the parents of the region. There he obtained a good elementary education in High German. His teacher, Friedrich Lange, was recognized universally for his ability and dedication. The religion classes were particularly beneficial, pupils being clearly shown the path to the Lord. At that time Leonard was not very attentive, actually preferring the outdoors to the classroom, but even so learned much from his excellent teacher.

After his years at school Leonhard lived with his older sister Sara, who with her husband Dietrich Rempel, lived a short distance away, having a similar property and a brick factory. He lived there for five years, learning the various skills of the brick-making trade. He also observed the good example of the Rempels striving for a Christian life. During this time he felt the desire to be baptized, with the encouragement of his mother, brother Abraham and the Rempels. During the time he was receiving baptismal instruction he became quite ill, and felt that he was not ready to die. He asked God to prolong his time of grace. The Lord granted his request. On the second day of Pentecost of 1838 (June 4) he was baptized together with a number of other candidates; among them was a school classmate of his, a young lady who would later become his wife.



Elder Leonhard Sudermann



On 9 December 1840 Leonhard's father died. His mother decided to travel to Russia, where eight of her children already lived. She asked Leonhard to accompany her. The plans were completed by the autumn of 1841. Farewells were serious, Mother Sudermann not being certain that she would ever see those remaining in Prussia again. This was Leonhard's first major trip. He had just previously strained his back with hard work, so he found it somewhat difficult to travel. There was, however, an interesting and varied landscape along the way, and meeting of siblings in Russia was something to look forward to. The first stop was the Molotschna. The sibling couple, Hermann and Barbara Harder, lived in Gnadenfeld Farm No 49, and wished to visit Prussia. Leonhard looked after their property while they were gone.

In the meantime Leonhard thought increasingly about the young lady he had previously met in school and at baptismal classes. Maria Sudermann's family had in the meantime moved to Berdyansk where her father, Abraham Isaak Sudermann, worked as a miller and was leading minister in the Mennonite fellowship. After the return of the Harders from Prussia, and perceiving that the attraction was mutual, Leonhard asked Maria's parents for permission to marry their daughter. They consented, his mother approved, and the Harders encouraged. They were married 23 October 1842 in Gnadenfeld. Former teacher, Friedrich Lange, now living in Gnadenfeld, presided, using Genesis 32:26 as text: "I will not let you go unless you bless me." After the wedding they helped in the Hermann Harder household. Both of the Harders soon thereafter contracted smallpox, and were severely ill. Maria well knew how to nurse the sick couple, while Leonhard managed their store and farm. When his older brother Hermann, who had married Maria's older sister Elisabeth, lost his wife during childbirth 31 December 1842, the newlyweds spent the last half of the winter helping him.

In the spring of 1843 Leonhard and Maria moved to Berdyansk, for the first few years living with her parents, Abraham and Elisabeth Sudermann. Leonhard was partner in the management of a brick factory. In 1845 they started building their home, a brick house on a garden plot adjacent to the city. These garden plots had been designated by the governor of the region, Count Voronzov, for "Germans," so that they would supply the city with fruit and vegetables. In the autumn of 1845, when the house was nearing completion, only needing interior finishing, they were asked to take care of the Harder household while the Harders again visited Prussia. The brick business was slow that time of year, so Leonhard and Maria accepted the challenge. In the meantime the store had expanded, but there were some servants and clerks to help. In the spring of 1846 the Harders returned and the Sudermanns went back to Berdyansk. They readied their house for occupation and settled in their home in June. In the autumn they began planting a fairly large garden. The first winter was difficult, a severe snowstorm striking on December 26, and lasting for three weeks. They felt fortunate to have a well under their own roof.

Leonhard's mother had remained in Gnadenfeld, likely living with children. She died 13 March 1851 at the age of 73 years, of heart failure. Leonhard considered it to be a privilege that he had been able to be at the funerals of both of his parents.

In the meantime father-in-law Abraham Sudermann, who had been elected as minister in Heubuden, West Prussia in 1823, began having church services for Mennonites in Berdyansk. To ease the workload a second minister was elected, and Leonhard was appointed "*Vorsaenger*" (song leader). At first services were held in private homes, but when a private school was built, worship could occur in the larger facility.

The Crimean War broke out in 1853, with principal hostilities occurring on the Crimean Peninsula, but in time port cities on the Sea of Azov were also threatened. On 27 May 1855, Pentecost Sunday, the Sudermanns were forced to leave home, business and flourishing garden, and flee. Besides leaving their home they were also deprived of their almost daily income from the garden. It was nearly a year before they could return to their home. Considerable damage had been done to their property, but they could still sing songs of praise to the Lord.

In the autumn of 1856 “the Lord flung him onto the sick bed” (*warf mich der Herr aufs Krankenbett*). Leonhard had jaundice and fever, likely hepatitis, and was very near death. Wife Maria certainly had her hands full. She carefully nursed her sick husband, but also dealt with the rumours that he was being thought of as a ministerial candidate. “No,” she replied, “then I would sooner see him die!” Leonhard himself, however, felt more positively about the challenge. During his prolonged recovery he felt a special blessing; he was able to attend his first church service, albeit with some help, shortly before Christmas.

Leonhard had an imposing stature, and a deep pleasant voice. He had a serious outlook on life in general, but still had a sense of humour which often bubbled over. He was liked by the surrounding Russian population, both those of high and low rank. What Leonhard Abramovich said and decided, was virtual law. He was a lover of horses, he enjoyed nature, particularly flowers and trees. He was known as a good gardener. It was said of him that he did not pray at all, he simply had a conversation with the Lord.

In the 1850s Leonhard was influenced by and associated with Eduard Wuest, a Lutheran pietistic preacher based in Neuhoftungsthal near Berdyansk. Some of Wuest’s “disciples” were the more radical tending toward the “*Froehliche*” orientation, among whom were Johann Claassen and Jakob Reimer from the Molotschna and Wilhelm Bartel from Berdyansk. Those of the calmer, more staid (*Vernuenftigen*) interpretation, included August Lenzmann of Gnadenfeld and Leonhard Sudermann. Leonhard considered himself to be a good friend of Wuest’s, he and his wife being among those present at Wuest’s deathbed on 13 July 1859.

Leonhard’s brother Abraham had repeatedly encouraged him to visit his old homeland. On 13 October 1858 they actually set out on the arduous five-week trip, joined by two young men, one of which was the youngest brother of Maria. They had a covered wagon, dishes, food and fuel. The wagon comfortably sat 4 people for travelling, with enough room for two to sleep, although they stayed in guest rooms where they were available. When the group finally reached their destination, the last part through snowy winter weather, Leonhard felt like bending down to kiss the ground. They were warmly greeted by relatives as well as old and new friends. Leonhard took a three-week side trip to Germany, spending 11 days in Berlin visiting various institutes and hearing famous preachers, as well as seeing museums and castles. He also travelled to Saxony and Dresden.

Leonhard and Maria delayed their return to Russia because the Heubuden congregation had elected brother Abraham as minister. They stayed for the installation celebrations, then headed for home in May of 1859. Farewells with the Dietrich Rempels turned out to be the last contact - Dietrich died in 1860, and his wife a few years later. The return trip again took five weeks.

Elise Jantzen was born on 10 November 1860, daughter of Johann and Elisabeth Jantzen. Elisabeth was the daughter of Herrmann, Leonhard’s older brother. Five days after Elise’s birth Elisabeth died. The circumstances are not mentioned in Leonhard’s autobiography, but Elise became the foster daughter of the Sudermanns; she lived with them, and was educated by them and migrated



to the United States with them in 1876. She married Gerhard Claassen in 1880, and had 7 children; the family continued to live in Whitewater. Elise was at Leonhard's deathbed in 1900. She eventually died 10 March 1931. Leonhard and Maria had no children of their own.

Soon after their return father-in-law Abraham Sudermann, due to his age and declining health, wished to resign from his position as leader and minister of the Berdyansk congregation. Because of the connection with the Gnadenfeld Church, and the fact that Abraham was still a member there, the ministerial election to replace him was held in Gnadenfeld on 30 September 1859. Leonhard was elected with 79 votes (we do not know how many people voted). He submitted himself to the wishes of the church, despite feeling that he was not worthy of the trust being placed in him. He resolved to put his whole time and effort into the new obligation. Being unused to writing reports or preparing talks, he spent considerable time and effort, together with much prayer, to write out his first sermon; his text was 2 Corinthians 5:18-21. He was to preach at the Gnadenfeld Mennonite Church. Upon very short notice he was informed by the elder that the sermon was to be shortened, since a marriage was also to take place that morning. The rather lengthy discourse stayed in his breast pocket while he tried valiantly to briefly summarize his thoughts. God gave grace. He preached his inaugural sermon in Berdyansk using Isaiah 40:6-11 on the last Sunday before Advent.

For at least three years Leonhard, with hard work, continued to write out his sermons, often working far into the night. Eventually he was able to memorize enough of the thoughts, so it did not all have to be written out. The Lord proved himself to be mighty through the weak. In time the requests to preach came so frequently, often on short notice, that he was on occasion forced to speak extemporaneously. Since his was not a paid position, and because he spent considerable time at his calling, economically he did not do as well as his neighbours.

Minister Abraham Sudermann, because of his age and poor health, withdrew from church work; the other minister had moved back to the colonies, so the membership wrote the *Kirchenconvent*, asking for further leadership in their situation. Two brothers had already started serving the church. In the autumn of 1865 Leonhard and these two were on the ballot for the eldership. Under the supervision of an elder from the Molotschna the election was held in September, and Leonhard was chosen. He entered full-time service, with added responsibilities. With the selection of an elder, and two other ministers, the Berdyansk congregation was no longer an affiliate of Gnadenfeld, but was granted independent status.

There had been complaints for some time that youth work had not been emphasized in the church. Leonhard introduced Sunday School/Catechism classes for Sunday afternoons. This was probably the first Sunday School held by Mennonites in Russia. Teaching from the Bible also helped him in the preparation of sermons.

The church membership had in the meantime grown. Private homes for services had long been abandoned, but even the school classroom was now proving to be too small and the benches too hard. A building fund for a new sanctuary had been established even before the onset of the Crimean War, and funds had been received from Prussia and the major colonies. Together with the money donated by the membership, the construction could start. The foundation was laid for a nine fathom long structure in May of 1858. But there was a rather nasty quarrel about the proposed length of the building - should it be eight or nine fathoms long? Despite the building committee being dismissed at one point, the first worship service was held in the new solidly built brick church on Pentecost of 1863. The finishing touches were soon completed, and the congregation could meet

in their totally paid-for church.

In 1869 Czar Alexander II, returning from a holiday in the Crimea, asked to meet a number of Mennonite representatives in Odessa. To his astonishment Leonhard was asked to be one of these representatives. There, in his discussions with the Governor-General of New Russia Kozebu and the Committee of Guardians about the Alexander scholarships for Mennonites, he stated that "Those among our young people who attend Russian *Gymnasias* (junior colleges) are lost." Leonhard was considered to be pious, fairly well educated, but entirely German-educated, so this opinion did not come as a surprise. Someone later commented that the honest bishop erred: "It has proven to be much harder to keep the youth in America than it ever was in Russia."

Again unexpectedly Leonhard was chosen by the Alexanderwohl Conference of 22 January 1871 to be one of the delegates to go to St Petersburg in February of 1871, hopefully to convince the Czar that Mennonites should be exempted from the proposed universal military service. A document outlining the Mennonite position on nonresistance was presented at St Petersburg on 2 March 1871. It was signed by Elders Gerhard Dueck and Leonhard Sudermann, Ministers Franz Isaak, Peter Goertz and Heinrich Epp and member-at-large Hermann Janzen. They were to present the Czar "the pleas of our people for farther gracious tolerance and legal affirmation of our freedom from military service both now and in the future."

The delegation met with Count Heyden, president of the Imperial Council, where as spokesman for the Molotschna group, Leonhard Sudermann outlined the position that Mennonites could not accept any type of service to the state organized by the military. But he added, "The Mennonites recognize the government, obey it, and pray for it." Asked what he would do in the event of war he replied "I would be reconciled to the enemy, and would embrace him, but not kill him!" Thereupon the Count smiled and opined that if all refused to serve in the armed forces, no state could exist. Count Heyden informed the deputies that they could now achieve no more and should go home. He would bring up the subject with the authorities at the appropriate time. The delegation had been fortunate in that the President of the Odessa Guardians Committee had been in the city to translate for them, since neither Elder Dueck, the leader of the Chortitza group nor Leonhard knew any Russian. This was a shortcoming which the President of the Council had not been slow to criticize.

After the St Petersburg meeting, Leonhard, together with another delegate, made a side trip to Prussia where he visited brother Abraham and preached in a number of churches and private homes over the Easter season. Another attempt was made to meet with the Czar as he was vacationing on the south coast of the Crimea at the Livadia Palace. Again Leonhard was one of the delegates, and again they were not able to meet with the Czar. Upon his return Leonhard and a substantial part of the church concluded that further negotiations would be fruitless; migration to North America seemed to be an increasingly favourable option.

Leonhard was one of the 12 delegates sent to explore Canada and the United States, from the point of view of availability of land, of opportunities in North America, but above all else the possibility to live according to their consciences. In his own words he was like one of the twelve spies sent to investigate a potential homeland. For him even the proposed alternate service suggested by the Czarist government gave indirect support to the military, exposed Mennonite youth to the dangers of life in the barracks and placed the future existence of Mennonites in Russia in jeopardy. For Leonard and many others pacifism was also associated with a closed community, a strict

separation from the world and resistance to all cultural assimilation. If Russia would not grant these conditions, another home would have to be found.

The five month trip began in the spring of 1873. The Bergthal representatives landed in Montreal in February, the other ten arrived in New York in April. Jakob Buller of Alexanderwohl and Leonhard Sudermann represented the Molotschna. Groups of the delegates visited various parts of the United States, including Nebraska, Kansas, Colorado and Texas. They then met in Moorehead, Minnesota to inspect the northern states and Manitoba as one group. On 14 June 1873 the 12 delegates left Moorehead, heading for Winnipeg on the river boat *International*. On Sunday, June 15, Wilhelm Hespeler, representative of the Canadian government, asked the crew to stop the engines and invited all on board to participate in a church service. John F Funk preached in English, and Leonhard Sudermann and Wilhelm Ewert (representative from West Prussia) in German. John Funk and Leonhard Sudermann sang a duet "*Was kann es Schoen 'res geben.*" Wilhelm Ewert closed the rather lengthy service with prayer. On Tuesday, June 17, the ship docked in Winnipeg; over the next number of days the delegates visited various regions of southern Manitoba. By July 1 Leonhard and Buller had seen enough and headed south the following day. Sometime during these travels Leonhard managed to meet Mennonites in Ontario, in Lancaster County, Pennsylvania, as well as Elkhart, Indiana and Summerfield, Illinois. He learned to know people in these regions, and also preached frequently.

On 22 August 1873 the delegates boarded the *S S Homonia* in New York for the return journey. The first day at sea was calm, but on August 24 a severe storm struck. It even washed away one of the lifeboats and did considerable damage to the ship. Leonhard thought about his dear wife at home and made his peace with God. After a number of days the storm settled and some of the damage could be repaired. Two of the five engine boilers were out of commission, two of the major sails were torn to shreds. Slowly the ship continued on its course. After a brief stops in Plymouth, England and Cherbourg, France, they landed in Hamburg on September 5. The following day they arrived in West Prussia, then eight days later in Alexanderwohl, Molotschna, where they gave their reports. All of the delegates were grateful to God for the safe journey, and were very happy to meet family and friends.

Upon reaching home Leonhard resumed his function as elder. The trip report convinced a large number of Mennonites that migration to North America was the preferred option. There was land available, and the Mennonites had lived many years in the USA and Canada without being forced to counter their cherished beliefs. When brothers from his own congregation asked what his own thoughts about the future were, Leonhard answered, "I have decided for immigration, but my wish would be that this important step would be taken together with my whole church." By others he was described as the "irreconcilable" leader of the immigration, somewhat surprising in an otherwise mild and understanding person. He started to settle his own affairs to ready himself for the trip.

Since Leonhard had not been able to attend a large informational meeting called for Alexanderwohl, the Czar's representative, Adjutant-general von Todleben asked for a separate meeting in Steinbach. Todleben tried to convince Leonhard that it would be preferable to remain in Russia, but the latter reiterated his intention to leave; the decision to leave, however, should be left up to each individual. Immigration in earnest occurred in 1874 and 1875, but it soon became apparent that a considerable part of his own congregation did not agree with Leonhard, and opted

to stay, so he gave up the dream of the whole congregation moving. At a wedding in Berdyansk in August of 1877 there were still at least 60 Mennonite families living in the city.

Added to the variations of opinion about migration was the fact that the Russian government was now planning to substitute *Sanitaetsdienst* (medical orderly service) and *Forsteidienst* (forestry service) for active military duty. This was a sign that the government did value the Mennonites and wished them to stay. But Leonhard was not convinced that the government would remain true to its promises - it had backed down on "The Privileges" which had been guaranteed almost a hundred years ago, and might do so again!

Leonhard, gentlemanly and kind, undoubtedly developed many good friends in Berdyansk. He often sought the advice of his good friend Cornelius Janzen, especially in public and business affairs. They were both very determined to leave Russia for the United States. While using entirely different tactics, they were striving for the same goal, although one suspects for different reasons. They still remained friends, though apparently they had some disagreements in their new homeland.

In the meantime Leonhard was having trouble with his travel plans. The property which he could have easily sold in 1873 was now without a buyer. He finally had to leave it unsold, trusting it to a dear friend and neighbour who was only able to sell it for two-thirds of the price several years later. He was however, able to overcome most of the other difficulties by the summer of 1876. The most difficult part of leaving was saying farewell to his own beloved congregation. Leonhard, his wife and foster daughter joined a group of Mennonites largely from West Prussia which included his two older brothers, Abraham and Hermann, with their families. Three sisters were staying, so farewells had to be said.

The group boarded the steamship *SS Main* in Bremen, and 15 days later arrived in New York on 26 August 1876. The three brothers had decided to first settle in Summerfield, Illinois where relatives, Wilhelm Quirings, were expecting them, and had already made comfortable arrangements for a place to stay. They also received a friendly reception from the local Mennonite church.

In the autumn of 1876 and spring of 1877 Leonhard searched for a home in Kansas or Nebraska. He found something very suitable, a group of Prussian Mennonites who had just established a small fellowship in Butler County, Kansas. Here he could fulfill his wish of also serving God in the United States. There were acquaintances and friends he had met in Russia, Prussia and in North America. The *Emmaus Gemeinde* in Whitewater, Kansas, asked for the Sudermanns to join them, and for Leonhard to be their pastor. They boarded the train 21 April 1877, eventually arriving in Whitewater, where they were invited into the home of Gerhard Regier. There they stayed all summer. A quarter section of land had been acquired and appropriate buildings were being erected. Despite interruptions due to rain they were able to move into the new house by September. The following spring a church was built 200 paces north of the house, certainly making the task of being the minister as easy as possible.

Work in the church was by-and-large quite rewarding. Nineteen years later Leonhard could say that his aims in life had largely been accomplished. Three other men in the congregation also participated in proclaiming the word, giving Leonhard the assurance that in the event of his death the church would continue to function. Eduard Claassen was a friend and one of the co-workers in the Whitewater church. He said of Leonhard, "Wisely and carefully he led the congregation, always concerned with our welfare. None of us ever sensed that he wanted to dominate or control us. The



years of our common pilgrimage passed in love and harmony...”

Leonhard was often asked to preach in other churches as well. In 1878 he attended a General Conference in Wadsworth, Illinois, where he found the parliamentary procedures to be somewhat “interesting.” He also attended other General and Western district conferences. In 1882 the Conference asked him to travel as far as Canada; he took the opportunity to visit other churches on the way. He participated in various committees, seemingly being most interested in mission work, both foreign and home missions.

On 1 April 1880 foster daughter Elise Jantzen married Gerhard Claassen in Whitewater. The couple continued to live in that community, between 1881 and 1896 having seven children. They seem to have been significant support for Leonhard and Maria in their latter years.

On 23 October 1892 Leonhard and Maria celebrated their fiftieth wedding anniversary. They very much enjoyed the participation of their “children,” of the congregation and many friends and relatives from far and wide, including those from Prussia and Russia. While still in bed that morning they were greeted by a choir singing “Now Thank We All Our God.” There were, of course festivities, and Leonhard eloquently expressed his thanks to God. He recalled that both he and his “better half” had been seriously ill on several occasions in their lives, but had both recovered.

In 1898 Leonhard noted that neither his eyes nor his ears were functioning as well as they had done in his youth. Even his memory was starting to fade, so for the past two years he had prudently and carefully thought out and written down everything he was going to say. Toward the end of his days Leonhard had become hoarse at times, making it difficult to preach, even to teach his beloved Sunday School.

Leonhard died suddenly of a heart attack on 26 January 1900, at 8:30 PM. That last day he was still diligently working at a sermon he planned to deliver on 4 February. He worked at it during the day, then they had guests, including Franz Wall from Russia, for supper time. Leonhard recited appropriate verses from a song, and women sat down to knit, and the men to talk. Then he was quiet, and despite attempts to rouse him he did not awaken. He breathed three breaths, his foster daughter Elise Claassen called to him, but there was no answer. He had died. The sermon he had prepared that day was preached the following Sunday, not by his own lips, but through the mouth



Maria and Leonhard Sudermann about 1890

of good friend and fellow minister Eduard Claassen.

The funeral was held 31 January 1900. Extra boards were added to the church to increase the capacity by 125, to a total of 500. Guests had arrived from many localities in Kansas; even Peter Janzen (Jansen) was there from Nebraska. At the Sudermann home Johann Andres preached on the text Revelation 7:13-17; prayer was by the elder of the Swiss Mennonite church. This was followed by another sermon and a song by the choir. At the church Elder Galle spoke, also using Revelation 7:13-17 as text. Gustav Harder preached on Hosea 6:1 and the choir sang "Forever With the Lord." This was followed by another five sermons and songs by the congregation and a number of different choirs. Elder Wilhelm Ewert prayed at the graveside and Elder Christian Krehbial concluded proceedings with a blessing. It was remarked that not only the family, but the whole church felt orphaned, having lost its elder.

Leonhard Abraham Sudermann seems to have been universally appreciated. He was thought of as "usually mild and soft spoken" although he could, when he felt it necessary, be the "uncompromising leader..." While Leonhard had only a rudimentary primary school education, his preaching was appreciated for its warmth, simplicity and modesty. He kept meticulous records of all his trips and kept a diary. His notes and letters show him to have been a conscientious and diligent worker.

Peter Janzen (Jansen), son of Cornelius, considered him to have been a good friend. They had even shared beds on a covered wagon on an extended trip to the Crimea. Peter said of him "Yes, he has gone from us, this true warrior who served his Lord, whose God-given voice never tired of singing songs for his Master. Now he sings the everlasting song of the redeemed before the throne of the Lamb. May his memory remain a blessing."

Wife Maria Sudermann died 8 November 1915 in Whitewater, Kansas. Foster daughter Elise Claassen died 10 March 1931, also in Whitewater.

#### Sources:

Claassen, Ed, "Etwas aus dem Leben und Wirken unseres heimgegangenen Aeltesten Leonhard Sudermann," *Christlicher Bundesbote*, 15 February 1900, p 6

Friesen, P M, *Die Alt-Evangelische Mennonitische Bruederschaft in Russland (1789-1910)*,

Halbstadt, Taurida, 1911, pp 82, 83, 85, 86, 185, 186, 493, 494, 498, 499-501, 506, 581, 707

Isaac, Franz, *Die Molotschnaer Mennoniten*, H J Braun, Halbstadt, Taurida, Russia, 1908, pp 295-300

*Mennonite Encyclopedia*, Vol 4, pp 653, 997

*Mennonitische Rundschau*

Autobiography of Elder Leonhard Sudermann, the last part completed by his wife

29 August, 1900 p 1; 5 September 1900, p 1; 12 September 1900, p 1;

19 September 1900, p 1; 26 September 1900, p 1; 3 October 1900, pp 1, 2

#### Obituary

By H Thiessen 7 February 1900, p 6

By Peter Janzen (Jansen) 14 February 1900 p 1

Reimer, Gustav E and Gaeddert, G R, *Exiled by the Czar: Cornelius Jansen and the Great Mennonite Migration, 1874*, Mennonite Publication Office, Newton, Kansas, 1956, pp 23-25

Schroeder, William, Huebert, Helmut T, *Mennonite Historical Atlas*, Second Edition, revised and expanded, Springfield Publishers, Winnipeg, Canada, 1996, pp 70, 71, 140, 141

Smith, C Henry, *The Coming of the Russian Mennonites*, Mennonite Book Concern, Berne, Indiana, 1927, pp 45, 51

Sudermann, Elder Leonhard, "Building a Mennonite Church in Berdyansk," Translated by John B Toews, *Mennonite Life*, June 1998, pp 16-23. Toews introduces this article with a brief biography of Sudermann.



**HEINRICH ABRAM EDIGER**  
(1858-1943)  
**ALEXANDER HEINRICH EDIGER**  
(1893- 1938?)

**HEINRICH ABRAM EDIGER**

Heinrich Abram Ediger was born 6 November 1858 in Gnadenfeld, Molotschna. His grandfather, Salomon Peter Ediger, had migrated from Prussia to the Molotschna in 1819. His father, Abram Ediger, first lived in Gnadenfeld, had taught in the private school on the Rosenhof Estate near Melitopol from 1861 to 1867, then moved to Berdyansk to start a business. According to one record Heinrich was the oldest of four children, the others being Peter (born 1860), Salomon and Elisabeth. Salomon later lived on the Itschkistak Station in the Crimea, and Elisabeth married Heinrich Rempel, and also lived in the Crimea.

Abram thought that his former school was a good place to send his sons. He undoubtedly was dedicated to his former teacher Heinrich Franz I, but also thought that it might be of advantage for his sons to have a change of scenery and to meet different people. He took the two boys the 180 km to the Rosenhof Estate to begin their classes on 13 August 1871. There were 40 students in all, 30 of them boys; 18 stayed in a dormitory which was just one thin wall away from the residence of the Franz family. The day started at 6:30 AM, with breakfast at 7 AM, and classes at 8 AM. Homework was completed by 9:30 PM, followed by devotions lead by Franz, and lights out at 10 PM. Subjects included religion, German, Russian, arithmetic, algebra, geometry, nature studies, geography, church and world history, penmanship and music. Much time was spent copying notes, since there were very few text-books. Franz



Heinrich Abram Ediger

was from Prussia, so he did not know Russian very well, but he certainly enjoyed teaching arithmetic. He was up with the latest in science, commenting on the Darwin theory of evolution, "We will allow Darwin to find his forefathers among the monkeys and to decorate his picture gallery of ancestors with them; his own photograph would be a fitting conclusion to this collection." Darwin's *On the Origin of Species* was first published in 1859, so the incorporation of these comments into the lesson by this time was remarkable. Singing, particularly chorales, was high on the agenda of the school.

Franz was a very strict teacher, punishing both misdeeds and lack of ability; he was often angry, although he did on occasion show his sense of humour. Heinrich seemed to, either because of his ability or good fortune, stay out of trouble. The one time he received corporal punishment was a relatively light "strap" with a ruler to his hand. Franz commented "You too, Brutus?" The second year Heinrich Franz II joined the faculty. He had an entirely different approach to education, using encouragement rather than punishment as a learning tool. The students seemed to learn even better this way! Physics was added to the course of studies. The third year seemed to go well for Heinrich, with English included as a non-obligatory subject.

Heinrich then went to the Gnadenfeld *Zentralschule*, probably for at least four years, one of his teachers being David Goerz. After he completed his schooling he taught for a few years. Heinrich then moved to Berdyansk, where he established a print shop and a bookstore.

Heinrich married Emilie Friesen, probably about 1885; she was the daughter of wealthy mill owner, J Friesen of Berdyansk. The couple had at least three children:

1. Theodor - went to university and became a historian
2. Harry - went to university and became a lawyer
3. Alexander - born 1893 in Berdyansk, went to University at St Petersburg, teacher, minister, musician (see separate biography)

Heinrich's print shop and bookstore seem to have been fairly successful businesses, opening the way for him to exert influence and become involved in civic affairs. P M Friesen mentions him as being involved in the printing of three different religious pamphlets, such as *Die Chortitza Zentralschule 1842-1892*, written by A Neufeld at the fiftieth anniversary of the school, and printed in 1893. Various publications of interest to Mennonites were also available in his bookstore. While being his occupation and obviously his delight, it was also on occasion the cause of trouble, because of ridiculously close government censorship.

Czar Alexander III died 1 November 1894. An official named Aronov composed a poem in honour of the Czar and took it to Ediger's establishment to have it printed. Presumably thinking that there could be no possible objections, the manager of the shop went ahead and printed it without consulting Heinrich. When Heinrich became aware of it, the deed was done. They elected to lie low. However, several days later an official appeared at Heinrich's office, asking if permission had been granted for the publication of the poem. It had not. No arguments as to the innocuous nature of the publication worked. Eventually Heinrich was charged with an illegal act, and was subject to a one to thirty day jail sentence and a fine of five to three hundred rubles. Also, during the time of the investigation he could not continue his work as a city official. Heinrich was not amused by the joking assertion of the various officials that they would visit him in jail. In time the problem was finally laid to rest when the government, in honour of the new Czar Nicholas II, declared an amnesty for all people charged with minor offences.

At the end of February 1895 Heinrich went to an exposition in St Peterburg. This was the first All-Russian Graphic Exhibition, where he participated in the book-printing and binding section. For his display he received a commendation.

In 1903 or 1904 there was another run-in with the law. The police appeared at the shop, claiming that something had not been censored. This time Heinrich hauled out the law-book, showing that for that type of printing censorship was not required. The charge stood. Heinrich personally knew the judge, W A Martos, so they had a brief discussion before the case came to the docket. They agreed upon a fine of 2 rubles, which is exactly what the judge then publically asked Heinrich to pay.

Heinrich was involved in printing and in selling books, but was also in writing. Together with David H Epp he worked as editor of *Der Botschafter*, which was initially published in Ekaterinoslav, but then moved to Berdyansk. It was presumably then printed by Ediger. Heinrich later wrote *Erinnerungen aus meinem Leben*, which was published in Germany in 1927, as well as a series of articles about his former teacher, *Meine Schulzeit bei Lehrer Heinrich Franz*, which appeared in *Der Bote* in 1930.

Heinrich was also involved in a number of other business ventures. He was one of the investors in the Tokmak Railway which was built 1910-1912. He was elected to the executive of the shareholders at a meeting held in Berdyansk 21 June 1911. He was also a director of the national bank in Berdyansk.

Heinrich was an official of the Mennonite community (they had their own mayor and functioned as a village of the Molotschna), but was also on the Berdyansk city council for a considerable length of time and was the mayor for some years. In 1897, as a councillor, he was involved in the planning for the visit of the Russian Minister of Transportation, Count Chilkov. The Count was going to arrive by steamer from the neighbouring port city of Taganrog. Police and Harbour Chief Savalischen was all for keeping things simple; a greeting with the traditional bread and salt was sufficient. Heinrich wanted to have a much more elaborate banquet. The skeptics said that the minister would not have time in any case. But Heinrich was prepared. When the minister came he was asked about his plans; probably revising his schedule he said he would be happy to participate in the prepared feast. He and his officials visited the cathedral, inspected the train station and strolled through a nice city garden, then appeared at the banquet promptly at the promised 6 PM. Heinrich had invited 60 guests, 30 city officials, harbour and customs officials, the director of the national bank, foreign consuls and a few industrialists. He had seated himself across the table from the Count. He found out that the minister had learned railway management from the ground up, starting by working in Canada for several years as a machinist! The friendship which came as a result of this meeting benefited both Berdyansk and Heinrich on a number of occasions when the Count helped in meeting people or even persuading the appropriate persons in government as the need arose.

As part of his function as city administrator, Heinrich often had to greet all kinds of officials. To help him adequately fulfill this role he had to look the part. In this capacity he had a special cap made (*Beamptenmuetze*). Now he could greet the governor of the province with equanimity. He even used this cap to his advantage on one occasion when some ruffians wanted to beat up Heinrich and his coach driver. Seeing this official-looking cap made them turn back.

It did not seem that Heinrich played a major role in the function the Mennonite Church of Berdyansk, but he did play some part. In 1899 the Mennonite suburb of Makorty had no school. The 40-50 students in the district had to travel the four-kilometre distance to city schools; this was a problem in the rain and snow in certain seasons. Heinrich built a roomy school and teacherage in his garden and offered it to the city for its use. The city administration gladly accepted the offer. The school was opened on the one hundredth anniversary of Alexander Pushkin's birth, so it was named Pushkin School. Heinrich was chosen curator. When the school opened it had 48 students. Heinrich did contribute to some other Mennonite causes, but one cannot say that the 3 rubles for the *Bethania Heilanstalt* he gave in October 1911 was overly generous; he opened the purse strings a little more when he contributed 25 rubles to help establish a bursary in honour of Minister Abraham Goerz in 1913. He did not seem to think that it was necessary to reach the Mennonite community for his business. While considerable a number of other printers and bookstores regularly placed advertizing in the *Christlicher Familienkalendar*, Heinrich did not place one ad in this publication between 1901 and 1915.

Heinrich was treasurer of the local Red Cross committee at the start of World War I, drawing the observation that it was peculiar for a German to be involved in this committee in a war against

Germany. He was also a director of the national bank. It is not known how long he held the position, but in 1918 he was the Danish Vice-Consul. During the German occupation of Ukraine in 1918 Heinrich set out for Berlin in October to purchase necessary medical supplies. With considerable adventures along the way, including riots on *Unter den Linden* in Berlin, he finally arrived back home December 17, narrowly avoiding areas occupied by Nestor Makhno.

During the times of prosperity the Edigers likely lived well. They had a large house in the city, but also a cottage outside of the city where on occasion they had picnics. At some time during the Civil War the Edigers must have started down-sizing, perhaps in preparation for leaving. They sold their large house to a Widow Riediger, but continued to live in one of the wings. When the Red Army started bombarding Berdyansk, people would, of course, try to flee. No Russian citizen was allowed to leave. Because he was the Danish Vice-Consul Heinrich was able to circumvent the regulation by escaping to the Crimea on an ice-breaker. Many other foreigners and his family were also allowed to crowd onto this vessel. The bombardment started 28 February, and they were able to flee on 1 March 1919. They were taken to Kerch, on the far eastern end of the Crimea, then travelled the remaining distance by train. Their family was able to stay with Heinrich's brother, Salomon, who lived at Itschki Station. Apparently soon after his escape Heinrich departed for Germany, leaving his wife Emilie behind. As excuse for leaving her he mentioned that the outside temperature was only 15 degrees, and there was a 14-hour ride on the deck of a small steamer to look forward to. She wept bitterly at the parting.

By 16 February 1921 Heinrich had arrived in Germany. His address at the time was Hofpiz Mohrenstrasse, Berlin. In 1927 he lived in Karlsruhe, possibly through connections with Benjamin Unruh. That year he published a book recounting his experiences; the address given in the book was Karlsruhe-Rueppur (Baden). He probably read the North American Mennonite papers, since he published a series of articles about his former teacher in *Der Bote* in 1930. Heinrich Abram Ediger died in Karlsruhe 23 June 1943. His brief biography in *The Mennonite Encyclopedia* was written by Benjamin H Unruh.

### ALEXANDER HEINRICH EDIGER

Alexander Heinrich Ediger was born in 1893 in Berdyansk; he was the third son of Heinrich Abram Ediger and Emilie Friesen. The home was described as having an educated, but according to Mennonite standards, somewhat worldly atmosphere. Alexander received his elementary education at home with tutors. As well as the regular subjects he also learned and excelled in music. He became an excellent pianist, and while he himself did not sing, developed into a well informed inspiring conductor and also was a composer. At the appropriate age he entered the classical *Gymnasium* in Berdyansk, even then demonstrating his great talents; he was also friendly and open. Having completed his studies at the *Gymnasium*, he studied in the History-Philology faculty at the University of St Petersburg. He then visited abroad, spending some time in Berlin and Vienna. At the age of 22 or 23 he returned home to Berdyansk.

Katharina Dyck, in the meantime, was born on Estate Tellentschi in the Crimea on 6 August 1896. Her parents, Jakob Dyck and Sara Reimer, owned one of the three farms which constituted the estate. She had a happy childhood, although it was saddened by the accidental death of brother Peter when he was nine years of age. The atmosphere in the Dyck home was decidedly leaning toward a pious outlook on life. One brother, Johann, became a medical doctor, and following a brief



time of service with the White Army, died of typhoid fever. Another brother, Jakob, was an outspoken opponent of the Mennonite *Selbstschutz*, and later was involved with tent evangelism.

For schooling beyond the primary grades Katharina went to the *Maedchenschule* in Halbstadt, studying there 1909-1912. She stayed in the home of her cousin, David Dyck. After graduation she continued her education at a college in Kharkov. With the unsettled times of the Revolution and the subsequent Civil War she and her parents thought that moving further south might be a little safer, so Katharina transferred to a college in Berdyansk in 1918. Here she rented a room from a Widow Riediger, who had bought the large house of Heinrich Ediger. The Edigers still lived in one wing of the house.

As entertainment the Mennonite and German young people of Berdyansk had formed a club. At the club people took turns preparing essays on various interesting themes, so one day Katharina was asked to prepare for the next Saturday. Alexander Ediger had in the past attended the club, but had stopped coming; this Saturday he came. She read her essay; the subject was God's Love. In the question period which followed there was dead silence. Then finally Alexander asked a few questions, probably somewhat skeptically, and she answered. By Katharina's account, "Later drinks and dancing followed. When Alexander came to me I told him I didn't dance. He was very much surprised, because in his circle everybody danced. When we went home he came to my side again. We talked a lot and he asked me if I would lend him my essay." They continued to talk. There were many interests in common, so they talked a lot, but also read the Bible and prayed together. When she went home to her father during the holidays, Alexander also went to Halbstadt to ask her father's permission to marry Katharina. Soon they were engaged, Minister Jakob Friesen of the Mennonite Brethren Church preaching on the occasion.

But the tides of the Civil War were relentless, and the Red Army was approaching even Berdyansk. Heinrich Ediger was planning to escape to the Crimea with his family, so Alexander and Katharina had to marry in a hurry. They were married by Minister Epp of the Berdyansk Mennonite Church in his own home. Katharina wore a plain, though beautiful, white dress. The young couple lived with his parents.

With the city being bombarded by the Red Army, Heinrich Ediger was able to flee to the Crimea on an ice-breaker, together with his family and some of the other members of the foreign community. Alexander and Katharina were on this crowded ship. Their first stop was at the home of Heinrich's brother Salomon at the Itschki Station. The house was very small, so they soon were invited to the home of another of Heinrich's siblings, Elisabeth Rempel, who lived in Sarona, and had a much larger house. Katharina helped with the housework and milked the cows. In time Alexander found employment teaching at Lutheran middle school in the village of Okretschi. There they lived in a small apartment, there also their daughter Katharina Dagmar was born in 1922.

During their time in Okretschi the White Army finally collapsed, and the Reds occupied the region. They also stormed into the small Ediger apartment. They dared not touch Alexander, because he lay in bed seriously ill with typhus. They wanted to know if there were any hidden treasures. After digging up a number of silver spoons that Katharina showed them, they left. Also during this time Alexander was elected as a minister by his home congregation in Berdyansk. It is probable that he travelled there for the dedication ceremonies.

The village of Fernheim in the Crimea wanted to establish a middle school, and also need a minister. Alexander was asked to accept the challenge, which he gladly did. For a time they lived



Alexander and Katharina in the Crimea

in a house in Karassan, together with Alexander's mother Emilie. Alexander and Katharina prepared a program during this time with the theme, "The walls also have tales to tell," Katharina providing the prose, Alexander accompanying on the piano.

In the autumn of 1923 word came that the village council of Liebenau, Molotschna would like to ask Alexander to be the teacher for their elementary school and also serve as minister. This was accepted without hesitation. Alexander hired a rack wagon and a team of horses. The wagon was filled with hay, covered with burlap, and then all their worldly possessions were placed on top of that. Somewhat portly Mother Emilie had considerable difficulty climbing up, but

gamely tried. The trip to Liebenau took about a week. The people on the way were fearful of strangers, so most nights were spent in the open. When they reached the first Mennonite village of Altona, however, they received a genuine Mennonite meal, including *Rollkuchen* and watermelons. They arrived in Liebenau before evening, and drove straight to the school yard, and again were served a delicious welcoming meal by "Old Grandmother Neufeld." That night they slept in proper beds in a fully furnished home. Alexander had his study, mother Emilie had her own corner room where she often looked after Dagmar and sewed clothes for her by hand. Emilie is not mentioned in subsequent moves by the family, and since there is no indication that her husband sent for her to join him in Germany, it is likely that she died in Liebenau sometime between 1923 and 1926.

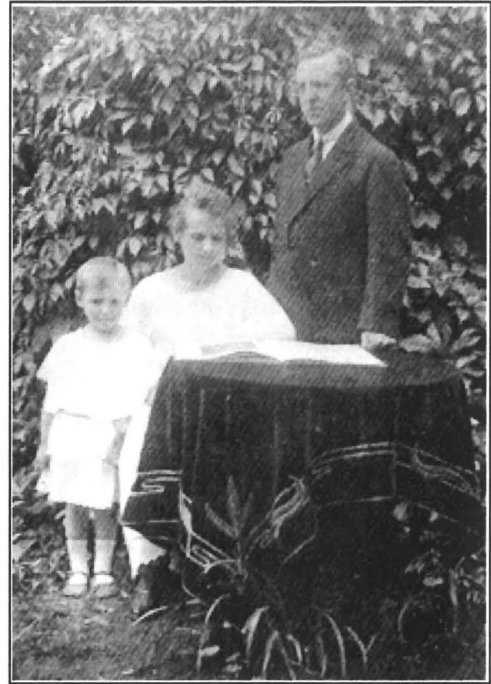
Alexander dug right into the work. He started teaching, assisted by Katharina (Tina) Dyck (nee Fehderau). But this teaching team did not last long. Alexander taught only one winter, when the Communists relieved him of his position. Ministers were not allowed to teach school. His assistant in the meantime immigrated to Canada. The village council did not wait long to appoint a Miss Hertha Rempel from Halbstadt and Alexander's wife, Katharina, as teachers. What Katharina did not have in size (she was called the Little Teacher) she certainly made up in dynamic energy. The school was always planning some kind of special event! She seems to have loved literature, especially poetry; memorizing long poems was meted out, sometime just as homework, other times as punishment, or even as reward.

Shortly after the Edigers arrived they actively participated in the centenary celebrations of the village of Liebenau, which were held on 23 October 1923. Alexander conducted the Liebenau choir in a presentation of Schiller's *Das Lied von der Glocke*. At the same time a dramatic representation of the poem was prepared in which Katharina did much of the work. An observer commented "The yard was large and overflowed with people. And the singing and music were wonderful. We had very good soloists in Liebenau.....since it was a warm October day, it was good that the mighty poplars that Liebenau had in abundance, provided their cool, refreshing shade. How exhilaratingly beautiful everything was." The same writer also had unforgettable memories of

dropping in to the Ediger home, sitting in the large living room, and never tiring of hearing Alexander play on the piano. Friday evenings were often spent at the Ediger home. Alexander would first present a meditation, and then rehearse chorales with the group. "The Little Teacher" together with her colleague frequently practiced various plays with them.

Particularly after he was relieved of his teaching job Alexander brought all his talents and energy into the work of the church, both locally in his own congregation, but also into the wider Mennonite community. The Schoensee congregation had what was thought to be the biggest and most beautiful church building of the Mennonites in Russia. Alexander was now breathing new breath into the spiritual life of the church. He was very friendly and had an amiable disposition. He was a good public speaker, and presented excellent sermons. Inspiring Bible studies, prayer meetings and Bible conferences and song festivals helped the church grow. Even choir practices were used to further the mission of the church. He performed the usual functions expected of ministers or elders, delivering funeral orations, or more happily performing marriages as well as baptizing new members.

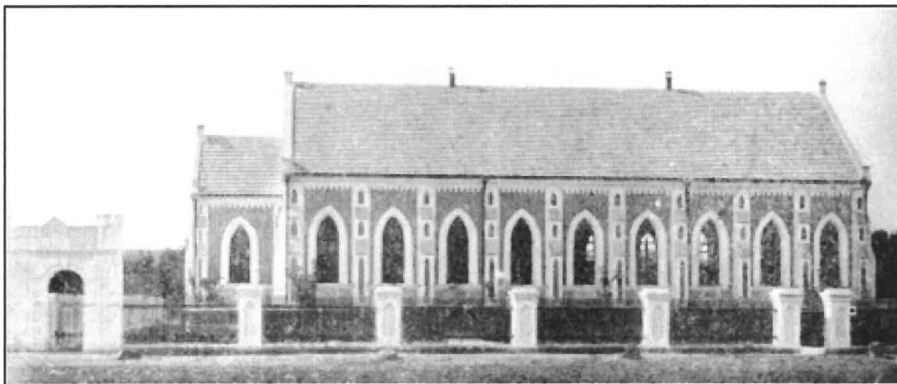
For a time there was improvement in the economy of the region, so that the Schoensee congregation could actually pay Alexander. During this time Katharina was expecting their second child, so Alexander wanted her to give up teaching, and bought a fairly large house in Schoensee. It had a big yard and a large garden. They bought it from a Widow Dueck with a long-term payment schedule; she wanted to migrate to North America. During the time that the Edigers lived in Schoensee Harry was born, on 7 December 1926. Dagmar had been a quiet baby,



Alexander with Katharina and daughter Dagmar in Liebenau

but Harry was not. He was also ill as an infant, having an especially severe case of mumps.

When the economy again slumped, however, the members of the Schoensee congregation could no longer support the minister's salary, so Alexander was forced to sell. The house was



The Schoensee Mennonite Church, built in 1909

bought by Peters, the teacher in Schoensee. But the people of Liebenau had not forgotten their minister, and built a small house for them so that they would have a roof over their heads. Even



Katharina helped in the construction, staining the floor with the help of a friend. This house, though small, must have meant a lot to the Edigers. There was a special dedication service for the new home in the Schoensee church. Elder Jakob Paetkau of Kalinovo, Memrik gave the dedicatory address. Katharina composed a 32-stanza poem of eight lines each for the occasion, which was recited by memory by a young student, Helene Neufeld.

An example of Alexander's work during this time was his participation in the *Menno-Feier*, celebrating the four hundredth anniversary of the beginning of Anabaptism. The program was held in the Schoenau Church on 25 January 1925. Alexander preached the first of three sermons, and made the concluding remarks. It is quite possible that he conducted the Liebenau mixed choir, the Liebenau men's choir as well as the Schoensee choir at this celebration.

Alexander accompanied a choir at a Christmas concert in Halbstadt on one occasion. Peter Rempel, a Teachers College student at the time, just barely got into the building. He wrote of his experience, "At the conductor's signal the singers rose and the wonderful strains of *Praise to the Lord, the Almighty, the King of Creation* rang through the church. This inspiring song was accompanied by Mr. Ediger, Liebenau on the piano.....Once again all eyes were fixed on the small choir which had risen at a signal from the conductor. In beautiful gentle tones the piano began the overture...."

The church must have appreciated Alexander's work. In 1925 he was elected as elder; the dedication service was carried out by Elder David H Epp.

While serving his own congregation with diligence, Alexander was also involved in the wider Mennonite community. The very timely *Kommission fuer Kirchenangelegenheiten (KfK)* (Committee for Church Affairs) was established in 1910 to deal with problems arising from new laws regarding religious groups. The first committee consisted of Elder Abram Goerz, Heinrich Braun and David H Epp. During the Revolution and the subsequent Civil War activities of the committee were suspended until October of 1922. The functions remained much the same, although with the Communist takeover became much more difficult.

At the *Allrussische Mennonitische Bundeskonferenz* held in Moscow 13-18 January 1925, Alexander was not a chosen

representative for his congregation, but functioned on the executive. He reported that requests had been presented to the appropriate government offices regarding the establishment of Bible schools and devotional services for children, but had been turned down. The decision about the non-resistant



A family gathering in Schoensee, Alexander and Katharina in the back row holding their children  
Elderly gentleman in the centre is Katharina's father, Jakob Dyck

status of young men was still pending. He was asked to continue the struggle. Executive of the KfK elected at this conference was Alexander Ediger, Aaron Dyck of Margenau and Kornelius K Martens of Grossweide, Alexander being the chairman. The address given for any official correspondence was that of Alexander in Liebenau. Members representing the Crimea and Siberia on the executive were added later.

As chairman of the KfK Alexander reported to the All-Ukrainian Conference of Mennonite Churches held in Melitopol 5-9 October 1926. Many of the objectives of the committee had not been met "through no fault of their own." (This would mean government interference, but this could not be mentioned directly, since there were government representatives monitoring the conference). They had made no progress with implementing private religious instruction, opening Mennonite children's homes with Christian training, publishing a Christian calendar, having choir conductor seminars or establishing itinerant ministries. Aaron Dyck then reported some success in tax relief for ministers, permission to establish a Bible school (this was never actually allowed to happen) and allowing young men to avoid active military duty. He then explained the work load involved: 75 official presentations, 24 meetings and 19 major trips. Alexander would have been involved in a great deal of this activity. He made a number of trips to Kharkov (then capital of Ukraine) and Moscow in dealings on behalf of the commission. The activities of the KfK came to a halt in 1929, when most religious activities became impossible.

At the conference in Moscow of 1925 the 78 delegates endorsed the establishment of a publication which would serve all Mennonites in Russia; after all, the Baptists and the Evangelical Christian Church thought it to be necessary. The new KfK executive should look after this project, and bring it to fruition as soon as possible. So Alexander was the editor, while managing editor and secretary was Kornelius K Martens, of *Unser Blatt*. The 2,500 copies were distributed monthly, starting in October of 1925; there were from 16, up to 24 pages. Regular contributors were David H Epp and Johann Rempel. *Unser Blatt* made a very significant contribution at the time when it was difficult for various Mennonite groups to be in contact with each other, and when anti-religious propaganda made spiritual life difficult. Reports from various congregations and conferences were published, as well as biographies, statistics and articles about relevant religious questions. An article in the first copy, *With God*, went on to say, "The Lord is with us, his omnipotence protects us, and we will not hesitate." Alexander himself wrote some of the reports, for example assessing the conference of 1926. It was entitled "With God - For God," and continued, "We are convinced of the importance and meaning of work in the Kingdom of God, it is a holy work." A number of poems by Kornelius Martens also appeared.

At the conference at Melitopol in 1926 the editors were encouraged to publish more frequently, but they pointed out that even once a month was already extremely hard to manage. Censorship very was difficult, but even obtaining enough paper to print on presented a problem. The last issue was published in June of 1928; with increasing religious persecution at the time it is not a surprise that further publication was forbidden by the government.

In August of 1928 Alexander and Katharina described the conditions under which they lived in a letter to relatives in Canada. The weather had been beautiful, but there was a bad harvest, so they did not expect to be paid any salary by the church. They had hoped for some income from *Unser Blatt*, but the government had closed it down. Alexander had actually gone to Kharkov in an effort to revive the publication - to no avail. They did have a big garden, three cows, two pigs and

50 chickens. They had to butcher some of the chickens due to lack of feed. But, they countered, the field was ripe for the harvest, although the reapers were few; that is, there was still much spiritual work to be done.

Alexander was the second speaker at the silver wedding ceremony of Kornelius and Sara Martens, held in Grossweide, Molotschna, on 7 July 1929. He, of course, knew the couple well, having worked with Kornelius. Using 1 Chronicles 29:9 as text, he showed that the mature King David remained thankful despite many misadventures. The celebrating couple had a great variety of experiences, often very difficult, and yet had much to thank for. The seven children were encouraged to always be a support for their parents.

Even with threats of expulsions and arrests on all sides, baptismal classes at Schoensee proceeded in the spring of 1930. The baptisms were performed on Pentecost Sunday on 21 March. Helene Neufeld was one of those on whom this rite was performed. Alexander gave her a special verse for the day, "All this also comes from the Lord Almighty, wonderful in counsel and magnificent in wisdom." Isaiah 28:29.

Soon after the baptismal service the Edigers left their home in Liebenau in order to evade the agents of the secret police (GPU), who were constantly threatening to arrest Alexander. They stayed in the home of a good friend, Elder Jakob Paetkau, who lived in the village of Kalinovo in the Memrik Colony. From this base Alexander looked for a job. In time he did find employment in the factory town of Stalino, located in the Don basin, in the library of a factory. His responsibility was to translate technical books from German and English into Russian. He was supervised by the factory manager, a Jewish man named Koteen, who seemed to be pleased with Alexander's work. He was also very musical, and loved to hear Alexander play piano in the evenings. It is of interest that at the same time Kornelius Martens also found employment in Stalino as a teacher of Latin and German, and as a bookkeeper at a medical college library.

Soon the secret police found Alexander in Stalino. Although the police found nothing illegal in their living quarters he was arrested and imprisoned some time in 1931. At first Katharina provided food for Alexander in the local jail, but then he was banished to Murmansk in the far north. Katharina now had to find employment. She found work in private homes giving German instruction to children, then she taught German in a Russian high school. When an offer came to manage the household of her nephew, Willmar Ediger in Simferopol in the Crimea, she was happy to accept the position.

In 1933 Alexander was transferred to Moscow for good behavior. Katharina received government permission to visit him there. Alexander was given leave and a room in the home of a Russian family. The couple spent several happy weeks together, helped by a food package received from the MCC. This allowed Katharina to prepare a number of delicious meals. But soon Katharina had to return to her job in Simferopol. Some time later Alexander was released outright on the grounds of his being a valued worker. He came to Simferopol, where the family spent wonderful time together. Alexander often sat at the piano and improvised while the family sang or hummed.

Alexander needed employment, so he contacted his former boss, Mr Koteen in Stalino. He was again accepted at his position of supervisor of the factory library. On the way to Stalino the Edigers were robbed, but were still happy to get back to their home.

The joy was not to last. The GPU again appeared at the door, searched the apartment, found nothing, but still arrested Alexander. Katharina was told not to leave the city and to make

arrangements for the care of her children at the Heinrich Edigers in Simferopol. This she complied with; Mr Penner, foreman for Heinrich Ediger, came to get the children. A short time later Katharina was also arrested.

Alexander and Katharina went to trial on trumped-up charges. Alexander, having learned that defense was useless, was wise enough to remain silent. Katharina tried to speak, but burst out crying. They were lead out of the courthouse as common criminals. Alexander's sentence was seven years, Katharina's five. They were delivered to the same prison although they did not see each other. On her birthday 6 August 1935 Alexander sent Katharina a tiny piece of bread that he had saved from his own meagre rations.

Soon it came time for the prisoners to be transferred to the Bamlag labour camp, a journey which took about a month. Because of his education Alexander was appointed secretary to the camp director. Special little privileges were helpful, such as extra food and permission to shop in the small camp store. Katharina also obtained a job in the camp office and on occasion also supervised the hospital. They were able to live together, sometimes several weeks at a time.

In December of 1934 Sergey Kirov was assassinated, beginning Stalin's paranoia-induced "Great Purge." For some peculiar reason the trickle-down effect changed all the rules at the labour camps. Alexander was transferred and made foreman of a team of railway builders. Katharina worked in kitchens and hospitals. In 1938 the work at that site had been completed, so a new camp was established. They were all loaded onto a train, Alexander and Katharina together. Having reached their destination, Alexander was suddenly ordered to present himself to the authorities. Katharina stared in the direction he had gone...and never saw him again. The only sign she had that he was alive was a postcard he sent some time later, with the heading, "My poor, poor Kaethe." From the card she surmised that he had been sent to a prison in the city of Svobodnyj.

Nothing further has been heard of Alexander Heinrich Ediger, excellent musician, well-liked Elder and dedicated Christian. It is assumed that he died in prison some time after 1938.

In 1940 Katharina had served her five years and was set free. Despite being officially barred from the city she found both of her children in Leningrad (St Petersburg). Dagmar was married by then; her husband was Pavel Kieselev. After many difficulties Katharina eventually reached the American Zone in Germany in 1948, then migrated to Canada in February of 1949. She settled in Kitchener, Ontario, where she worked in a hospital for 20 years. At the celebration of her one hundredth birthday in 1996 both Dagmar and Harry were able to come out of Russia. Katharina Ediger died 6 September 1998 at the age of one hundred and two. Her funeral was held in the Kitchener Mennonite Brethren Church, where she was a member. Pastor John Wall, who had helped her adjust to the new country, gave the funeral oration.

#### Sources:

##### *Der Bote*

"Unser Blatt, Geburt und Tod" by H Goertz, 19 January 1983, pp 1, 2

##### *Der Botschafter*

##### Report:

List of donations to memorial fund, 18 January 1913, p 4

- Ediger, Heinrich, *Erinnerungen aus meinem Leben*, self-published, Karlsruhe-Rueppurr (Baden) Germany, 1927, many pages. These remembrances, while interesting, give very little actual personal information about Ediger himself
- Ediger, H A, *Meine Schulzeit bei Lehrer Heinrich Franz*, a series of articles in *Der Bote* 28 May 1930, p 1; 4 June 1930, p 1; 11 June 1930, p 1; 18 June 1930 p 1
- Ediger, Katharina, *Under His Wings: Events in the lives of Elder Alexander Ediger and His Family*, Edited by Elisabeth Schulz, Translated by Mark Bachman, self-published, Kitchener, Ontario, Canada, 1994, many pages. Much of the story and many of the personal details of this biography come from this book
- Friesen, P M, *Die Alt-Evangelische Mennonitische Bruederschaft in Russland (1789-1910)*, Raduga, Halbstadt, Taurida, 1911, pp 620, 670, 671, 712
- Huebert, Helmut T, *Kornelius Martens: Our Skillful Advocate*, Springfield Publishers, Winnipeg, Canada, 1986, pp 11-13
- Huebert, Helmut T, *Molotschna Historical Atlas*, Springfield Publishers, Winnipeg, Canada, 2003, pp 59, 153-54, 184
- Mennonite Encyclopedia*, Vol 2, p 148-149; Vol 3, p 218; Vol 4 pp 786-787
- Mennonitische Rundschau*
- Letter to the editor, sent in by Katharina Regier from Laird, Saskatchewan, quoting from a letter sent to her by Heinrich Ediger from Germany. The recounting of events of the family escape from Berdyansk is remarkably different than his own subsequent report, and that of his children. In the letter he says, for example, that they were picked up by a French destroyer while the Communists were already in Berdyansk. These "variances" put in serious doubt the truth of any of his stories. 30 March 1921, p 12
- Letter received from Moscow, 18 February 1925, p 3
- Obituary:
- Katharina Ediger, February 1999, p 28
- Report of the Menno-Feier held 25 January 1925, 4 Mar 1925, p 3
- Report on the *Allrussische Mennonitische Bundeskonferenz* held in Moscow 13-18 January 1925, 1 April 1925, pp 5, 8, 9; 8 April 1925 Beilage, pp 17-20
- Report of the silver wedding celebration of Kornelius and Sara Martens, 18 September 1929, p 12
- Report of the Birthday Celebration of Katharina Ediger, December 1996, p 13
- Rempel, Peter, in *Overarching Grace in the Lives of Peter Rempel and Katharina Baerkmann*, translated and published by Dorothy Huebert, Winnipeg, Canada, 2003, p 63
- Schroeder, William and Huebert, Helmut T, *Mennonite Historical Atlas*, Springfield Publishers, Second Edition, 1996, pp 28, 33, 34
- Toews, Aron A, *Mennonitische Maertyrer*, self-published, 1949, pp73-78



## SOURCES

(for the entire Berdyansk chapter)

Bahnman, Marvin, editor and compiler of *"Our Heritage: Remembrances of My Life in Russia 1866-1895, from the Diary of Katharina (Wiens) Bahnmann Dyck Regier 1859-1936,* July, 1997, many pages

Berdyansk City Map was used for the picture of the hotel shown in the history of the city.  
Someone who has actually stayed in the hotel thinks that it was further inland than shown on the picture, and wonders if there may have been a computer "modification" of the photograph

Blake, R L V French, *The Crimean War*, Archon Books, Hamden, Connecticut, pp 87, 149  
*Der Bote*

Obituaries:

Wall, Johannes Peter, 31 October 1934, p 3

Refugee Lists: 1 July 1925 p 5; 5 June 1927, p 4

*Der Botschafter*

Advertising: *Deutsches Krankenhaus*, 4 January 1914, p 1

*Mennonitisches Jahrbuch 1910*, 1 January 1912

List of contributors to *Bethania Heilanstalt*, 24 February 1912, p 5

List of church services: 6 January 1913, p 1

News Items: 30 September 1908, p 2; 6 January 1912, p 2; 9 March 1912, p 3  
4 May 1912, p 2

Reports:

Report on the general membership meeting and construction of the Tokmak Railway  
14 February 1912, p 2

Report on the Mennonite Elementary School, 15 July 1914, p 3

Report of reactions at the start of World War I, 22 July 1914, p 3

Report of a Mennonite gathering regarding help for the war, 1 August 1914, p 3

Report of the appointment of P Fast, 5 August 1914, p 3

Report of a prayer meeting in the Mennonite church, 10 October 1914, p 4

*Christlicher Familienkalender*

Advertising:

Numerous pages in each of the publications, certainly from 1901 to 1914

News Reports:

Calender of Events, 1909, pp 120, 121

Durksen, Martin, *Die Krim war unsere Heimat*, self-published, Winnipeg, Canada, 1977,  
pp 66-68, 111-112, 143-144, 159, 240-242

Epp, George K, "Urban Mennonites in Russia," a chapter in the book *Mennonites in Russia 1788-1988, Essays in Honor of Gerhard Lohrenz*, edited by John Friesen, CMBC  
Publications, Winnipeg, Canada, 1989, pp 239-259

*Familienkalender 1882*, Elkhart, Indiana, article by Leonhard Sudermann

*Friedensstimme*

Advertising:

Bible conference of 5-7 October 1908

16 August 1908 pp 517-18; 30 August 1908, pp 449-50; 27 September 1908  
p 617

Advertising General Conference of 23-25 August 1911

17 August 1911, p 2

Reports:

Report about *Realschule* in Berdyansk, 10 June 1906, p 242

Wounding of Minister Abraham Janzen, 4 November 1906, p 490

Report of a court case, 26 January 1911, p 9

Report of the *Forstei* meeting of 4 May 1911, 18 May 1911, p 4

Tokmak Railway investor meeting, 5 July 1911, p 9

Protocol of the General Conference of 23-25 August 1911, 14 September 1911, pp 1-4

Published sermon from the conference, 24 September 1911, pp 2-5

List of Contributors to *Friedensstimme*, 12 December 1912, pp 6, 7

Friesen, P M, *Die Alt-Evangelische Mennonitische Bruderschaft in Russland (1789-1910)*,  
Halbstadt, Taurida, 1911, pp 78, 86, 88, 166, 168, 169, 183, 199, 205, 223, 227, 344,  
355, 456, 493, 498, 517, 546, 593, 594, 603, 604, 612, 616, 618-20, 673, 691, 696, 706,  
707, 708, 765-66

Friesen, Rudy P with Friesen, Edith Elisabeth, *Building on the Past*, Raduga Publications,  
Winnipeg, Manitoba, 2004, pp 680-686

*Genealogy of Aron Martens 1754-1977*, pp 25, 27

*Genealogy of Isaak Schroeder 1738-1973*, pp 150, 151

Giesinger, Adam, *From Catherine to Khrushchev: The Story of Russia's Germans*, self-  
published, Winnipeg, Canada, 1974, pp 123-124, 126

Goerz, H, *Die Molotschnaer Ansiedlung*, Echo-Verlag, Steinbach, Canada, 1950/51, p 163

Goossen Family History, from Harry Giesbrecht, Winnipeg

*Great Soviet Encyclopedia*, translation of the Third Edition, Macmillan Inc., New York and  
Collier Macmillan Publishing, London, 1970, Vol 3, p 179

Harms, Wilmer A, *The Odyssey of Escapes from Russia*, Hearth Publishing, Hillsboro, Kansas,  
1998, p 179, 180

Hiebert, Clarence, *Brothers in Deed to Brothers in Need*, Faith and Life Press, Newton, Kansas,  
1974, pp 13, 46, 68, 159, 170, 200, 243, 293, 294, 302, 321, 383

Hofer, D M, *Die Hungersnot in Russland und Unsere Reise um die Welt*, K M B Publishing  
House, Chicago, Illinois, 1924, pp 124-125, 286-287, 347-349

Huebert, Helmut T, *Hierschau: An Example of Russian Mennonite Life*, Springfield Publishers,  
Winnipeg, Manitoba, 1986, p 282

Huebert, Helmut T, *Molotschna Historical Atlas*, Springfield Publishers, Winnipeg, Manitoba,  
2003, pp 101-102

Huebert, Helmut T, *Mennonite Estates in Imperial Russia*, Springfield Publishers, Winnipeg,  
Manitoba, 2005, pp 8, 11, 28, 31, 33, 117, 125, 177, 187, 192-196, 224, 236

*Jahresbericht des Bevollmaechtigten der Mennonitengemeinden in Russland in Sachen der  
Unterhaltung der Forstkommandos im Jahre 1908*, p 19

Jansen, Peter, *Memoirs of Peter Jansen: The Record of a Busy Life*, self-published,



- Beatrice, Nebraska, 1921, many pages
- Leibrandt, Georg, "The Emigration of German Mennonites from Russia to the United States and Canada in 1873-1880," *Mennonite Quarterly Review*, Part I, October 1932, pp 209, 210; Part II, January 1933, p 24
- List of Mennonites living outside of the Bergthal Colony in 1852, Odessa State Archives
- List of Mennonites living outside of the Chortitza Colony in 1852, Odessa State Archives
- List of Mennonite living outside the Molotschna Colony in 1852, Odessa State Archives
- Lohrenz, Gerhard, *Heritage Remembered: A Pictorial Survey of Mennonites in Prussia and Russia*, CMBC Publications, Winnipeg, Manitoba, 1974, pp 37, 100, 115, 119
- Mennonite Encyclopedia*, Vol I, p 396; Vol II, p 148-149, p 235; Vol III, pp 91-92, 324, 849; Vol IV, p 859
- Mennonitische Rundschau*
- Food voucher requests:
- 31 May 1922, pp 14, 16; 7 June 1922, pp 4, 5
- Letters:
- From Heinrich Abram Ediger, 30 March 1921, p 12
- Looking for inheritance money from death of Nikolai Huebert, 24 June 1925, p 6
- Money vouchers:
- 3 October 1923, p 8
- Obituary:
- Janzen, Cornelius, 26 December 1894, p 1
- Refugee Lists:
- 19 January 1921, p 3; 16 February 1921, pp 6, 7; 4 March 1925, Beilage, pp 17, 19; 1 July 1925 p 11
- Reports:
- Reimer, Jacob, 7 February 1900, p 2
- Wiebe, Elder Jacob A, 26 June 1912, p 4
- Committee to distribute food vouchers, 1 March 1922, p 23
- Starvation conditions in Berdyansk, 13 September 1922, p 11
- Nikolai Schroeder death by starvation, 17 May 1922, p 11
- Report on the condition of Jacob Duerksen, 20 June 1923, p 8
- David M Hofer report on his trip, 1 August 1923, pp 8, 9
- Looking for relatives of Wilhelm Wilhelm Ewert, 22 August 1923, p 12
- Letter of thanks written by Elder Leonhard Sudermann, 14 November 1923, p 7
- List of Delegates at the *Bundeskonferenz der Mennonitengemeinden Russlands* 13-18 January 1925 in Moscow, 1 April 1925, pp 5, 6
- Mennonitisches Lexikon*, Band I p 248; Band II, p 391
- Neufeld, Hermann, *Hermann and Katharina Their Story*; The Autobiography of Elder Hermann A and Katharina Neufeld, in Russia and in Canada, Translated and edited by Abram H Neufeld, Centre for Mennonite Brethren Studies in Canada, 1984, p 65
- Palmer, Alan, *The Banner of Battle: The Story of the Crimean War*, St. Martin's Press, New York, New York, 1987, pp 40-41, 194-95, 239
- Quiring, Walter and Bartel, Helen, *Als Ihre Zeit Erfuellt War: 150 Jahre Bewaehrung in*

- Russland*, published by the authors, Saskatoon, Saskatchewan, 1963, pp 74, 75, 98
- Reimer, Gustav E and Gaeddert, G R, *Exiled by the Czar: Cornelius Jansen and the Great Mennonite Migration, 1874*, Mennonite Publication Office, Newton, Kansas, 1956, many pages
- Reinlaender Gemeinde Buch 1880-1903*, edited by John Dyck and William Harms, Manitoba Mennonite Historical Society, 1994, pp 440-41, 457-58
- Russian 1835 Census of the Molotschna Villages, pp 198, 587
- Schroeder, William and Huebert, Helmut T, *Mennonite Historical Atlas*, Second Edition, revised and expanded, Springfield Publishers, Winnipeg, Canada, 1996, pp 15, 70, 71, 140, 141
- Smith, C Henry, *The Coming of the Russian Mennonites*, Mennonite Book Concern, Berne, Indiana, 1927, many pages, including 51, 101, 121
- Toews, John B, *Lost Fatherland*, Herald Press, Scottsdale, Pennsylvania, 1967, pp 28, 95
- Toews, John B, *Czars, Soviets & Mennonites*, Faith and Life Press, Newton, Kansas, 1982, pp 39, 123
- Unruh, Benjamin Heinrich, *Die niederlaendisch-niederdeutschen Hintergruende der Mennonitischen Ostwanderungen im 16., 18. und 19. Jahrhundert*, self-published, 1955, pp 242, 278, 322
- Urry, James, *David H Epp: Intellectual, Spiritual, Cultural Leader 1861-1934*, a chapter in a book edited by Harry Loewen, *Shepherds, Servants and Prophets*, Pandora Press and Herald Press, 2003, pp 85-102
- Westwood, J N, *A History of Russian Railways*, George Allen and Unwin Ltd, London, 1964, pp 22-24, 61, 64

# Chapter III

## MELITOPOL

### TABLE OF CONTENTS

Table of Contents.....	219
History of Melitopol.....	220
Map of Melitopol about 1900.....	224
Map of Melitopol “Rayon” (1972).....	225
Map of Melitopol Region (2000).....	226
Map of Melitopol City (2000).....	227
Pictures of Melitopol.....	228
List of People.....	231
Pictures of People.....	242
Mennonite Institutions.....	244
Picture of Mennonite Church.....	247
Mennonite Events.....	248
Picture of All-Ukrainian General Conference, 1926.....	250
Mennonite Businesses.....	251
Pictures of Business Establishments.....	252
Sources.....	255

## HISTORY OF MELITOPOL

Melitopol is a city located on the west bank of the Molochnaya River. It is 100 km south of Zaporozhye, about 40 km northwest of the Sea of Azov and 10 km southwest of what used to be the Molotschna Mennonite Colony. It is the capital of the Melitopol region, part of the Zaporozhye Province.

A frontier settlement was established on the site in 1784. The first known map of the Molotschna Mennonite Colony was drawn by a travelling businessman in 1806; the map includes an area labelled “Mulberry Plantation but a city to be built.” This was likely the village which in 1816 was named Novoaleksandrovskaya Sloboda. In 1841 the town was renamed Melitopol and officially became a city. The Doukhobors had settled on much of the land in the surrounding area. In the early 1840s they were given the choice to recant or to be exiled to the Caucasus region; almost all chose to leave. Presumably the land around Melitopol would then be available for others to settle and found villages.



Melitopol Crest  
in 1845

From 1841 to 1923 Melitopol was the county centre of this area of Taurida; after that date it was still a centre, but for the province (gubernia) of Zaporozhye.

Melitopol became a trade centre for the region, serving the western villages of the Molotschna, Prischib and Eichenfeld colonies. A considerable number of Mennonite estates were established in the area, and they used the various institutions available in the city, such as banks and hospitals. Estate owner H Wiens, for example, withdrew a substantial amount of money from the Azov-Don-Bank on October 31, 1907. When robbers attempted to attack him, a student, H Friesen, was wounded and was taken to the City Hospital. The extensive Taschtschenak estates were about 18 verst north-northwest of the city, Alt-Taschtschenak an equal distance south-southwest. Melitopol was also the seat of the regional court. In 1904 the murderers of Pastor Baumann of Prischib, his wife and his daughter were tried, found guilty and sentenced at the Melitopol Regional Court. The Alexandrovsk (later Zaporozhye) to Sevastopol railway line ran through Melitopol. This likely helped the economic development of the city.

Mennonite families may have settled in Melitopol as early as 1845; by 1852 Isaak Enns operated an oil press in the city. Other tradespeople and industrialists moved in over the years, such as Jakob and Wilhelm Klassen, who came from Neu-Halbstadt in 1886 to establish an agricultural machinery factory. Melitopol was also the home of a *Realschule* attended by Mennonite students, perhaps as early as the 1870s. There was at least one Mennonite teacher, Johann Fast, in 1906. The *Forstei* Taxation list of 1908-10 showed that Mennonite property in the city was valued at about 15,454,520 rubles; Mennonite property in the region (land value only) was 20,480,306 rubles. On the 1908 list the Klassen agricultural machinery factory and foundry was valued at 65,000 rubles, the Abraham Klassen steam-powered flour mill at 20,000 rubles, and the Jakob Warkentin steam-powered mill and oil press at 10,500 rubles. It was said that there were about 25 Mennonite families living in Melitopol in 1902. Some time before 1914 a Mennonite *Fortbildungsschule* was founded in Melitopol. Mennonite estate owners participated in local county governance (*zemstva*) in both

the Berdyansk and Melitopol regions, but there is no record of Mennonites having been actively involved in the Melitopol city government.

While not definitely proving Mennonite patronage, advertising in Mennonite publications by various Melitopol business establishments would indicate some interest. The *Christlicher Familienkalender* produced by Abram Kroeker carried many pages of advertising. There was a considerable number of agents in Melitopol for a wide variety of products and services. Examples would be: cars (Adam Benke, "Komnick" automobile), fabric and clothes (Provodnick, Russian and French fabrics), furniture and mirrors (S G Schlep), engines (J D Safermann), industrial builders (Anton Erlanger and Co., who built steam flour mills). A number of dentists also advertized (Berschatzky, Katzin, Spindler), all of them mentioning that they produced false teeth. Other medical services were also available, such as R Garnier, an ophthalmologist. G Lifschik was a printer and book publisher, J S Gammal a photographer. Remarkably the Mennonites of Melitopol seldom used their own publications to advertise; only one instance could be found in the *Christlicher Familienkalender* from 1901-1915, where H H Hamm of Halbstadt and Lichtenau declared himself as agent for Brothers Klassen of Melitopol, for the sale of threshing machines.

A Mennonite congregation was eventually organized, probably by 1910. In 1913 construction was begun on a beautiful church building with a tall bell tower. It was the first Mennonite church in Russia to obtain official government approval for such a tower. The building was dedicated on 20 April 1914. At that time the population of the city was 22,000.

With the outbreak of World War I at least six Mennonites volunteered for the Medical Corps on the first day. About a month later members of the Mennonite congregation established a Mennonite Field Hospital, with Dr D Hildebrand the medical director. It was officially dedicated on 12 October 1914.

During the period of anarchy after the Russian Revolution a number of estate owners moved into Melitopol, presumably because they thought it was safer. Unfortunately a number of Mennonites were murdered by Makhno bandits in the city in the spring of 1919. Some of the battles of the prolonged and confusing Civil War were fought in the area. On 18 June 1918 the Ukrainian National Republic army defeated the Red Army near Melitopol. After the collapse of attempts to form an independent Ukraine, the region was for a considerable time occupied by the White forces. In the spring of 1920 the White Army, under the command of General Peter Wrangel, began a new offensive which started in the Crimea, by June reaching Melitopol and the Molotschna. On June 20 a battle was fought in the Molotschna region, in which the Red Army was routed. Meanwhile General Wrangel and his staff, with headquarters in Melitopol, anxiously awaited news from the battlefield. Finally the news came: "The enemy has been struck on the head, encircled by our warriors. General Tkachev reports a complete destruction of the enemy." The following day, on June 21, a church service was held in Melitopol, thanking God for the victory. Eventually, however, the Red Army did drive the White forces back into the Crimea, and eventually the whole area came under Communist rule.

In 1922, during the time of famine in southern Russia, a number of Mennonites from Melitopol requested food drafts from friends and relatives in North America, mostly from the United States, using the pages of the *Mennonitische Rundschau*. There were eleven specific pleas for help. The famine must have been fairly devastating, although no deaths are mentioned.

The last general conference (*Bundeskonferenz*) held by Mennonites in Russia was held in

Melitopol 5-9 October 1926. There were 83 delegates from the various Mennonite churches in Ukraine, with 14 guests from other parts of Russia. Unfortunately, two government officials also monitored the proceedings. The general emphasis at the conference was that it would be necessary for all branches of Mennonites to cooperate if they wished to survive. Jakob Rempel of Gruenfeld chaired the proceedings, while P Penner of Lichtfelde delivered the keynote address.

A number of institutions were founded in Melitopol during the Communist era. The Melitopol Pedagogical Institute (later University) was begun in 1922. The Melitopol Institute of Agricultural Mechanization was founded in 1930. A regional museum was also started.

During the period of collectivization in the early 1930s, a number of Mennonites who had been expelled from their land in the Molotschna moved to Melitopol, it being the closest large city. The Johann Giesbrecht family, for example, walked from Lichtenau to Melitopol in 1931. They lived in a small Mennonite enclave in Melitopol called *Krasnaya Gorka* (Red Hill). They moved on to Kamenka in 1932. Kornelius Peter Bergmann and wife Ida moved to Melitopol in 1930. He occasionally preached and distributed tracts. He was imprisoned in Melitopol in 1936, then banished to Siberia in 1937.

During the Great Purge, the jail in Melitopol often seemed to be teeming with Mennonites. Specific mention of imprisonment in 1937 was made in the stories of Peter Jakob Toews, Gerhard Kornelius Plett, Heinrich Huebert, Peter Kornelius Peters and Nicolai Rempel.

After the invasion of Russia 22 June 1941, the German army advance was very rapid. By October 6 Melitopol was occupied. There seemed to be a defeatist attitude in the Red Army, with 100,000 soldiers being captured in the Melitopol-Berdyansk area. The *Reichskommissariat Ukraine* (German-occupied Ukraine) was divided into six districts. The Crimea District, under Gauleiter Alfred Frauenfeld, had headquarters in Melitopol. Although he was a convinced Nazi, Frauenfeld called for reform of German policies, which included land reform, food relief and political autonomy for the local population. Despite these calls for improvement, the Nazis targeted dismantling of education as a priority, likely to destroy Ukrainian culture. All grades above the fourth grade were abolished. In the summer of 1942 even the fourth grade was canceled in Melitopol. The children had to help tear down buildings so the materials could be sent to Germany. The tides of war changed, however, and in September/October of 1943 the region was re-occupied by the Soviet forces, and remained under Communist control.

The steppes surrounding Melitopol grew vegetables, grapes and other fruit. The city functioned as a regional manufacturing centre, with automobile engines, tractor parts, refrigerators, food products and consumer goods coming off the assembly lines. The agricultural machinery factory begun by the Klassen brothers in 1886 was converted to produce equipment for mills and elevators in 1926, then was retooled in 1947 to make equipment for the food processing industry. With the breakdown of the USSR further changes followed. In 1998 the factory was reorganized to an open-stock company called "Melitopolprodmarsh," which is still in operation.

In the northwestern part of the city is the Melitopol Kurhan, a royal burial mound of the Sythians, dating from the fourth century BC. It was excavated in 1954; two catacomb-like tombs were discovered, one of them containing 4,000 gold ornaments and a funerary chariot.

South of Melitopol are swampy wetlands of the lower Molochnaya River. In 1995 a preliminary inventory of all wetlands in Ukraine was undertaken. On 5 June 2002 a "World Wetlands Day" was celebrated in Melitopol, with the Melitopol State Pedagogical University



scientific research playing a prominent role.

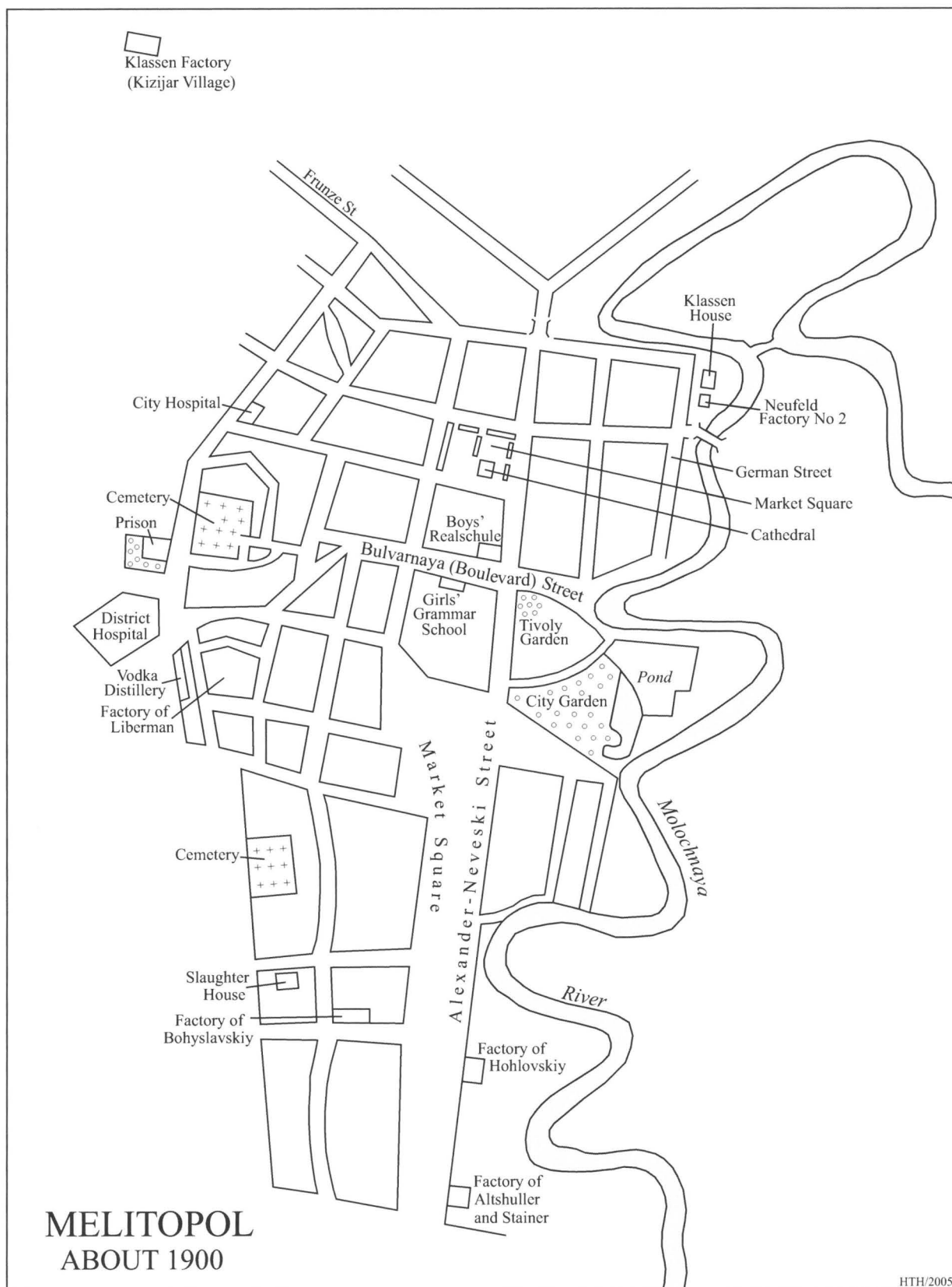
On 6 May 2004, as a result of careless smoking on the site, a huge fire, with subsequent explosions, was started in a large munitions depot about 20 km north of Melitopol. The depot contained 90,000 tons of artillery shells, including rockets of various types. Fires and explosions continued for several days, with some of the rockets flying a distance of 10-40 km. To prevent the loss of life 7,000 people were evacuated from 11 settlements, including the two closest villages, Novobogdanovka and Spasskoye. Flames shot up to 300 metres into the air, and could be seen for 90 km around. Two thousand workers stood by, but for a time could do nothing to prevent further destruction. Two stories circulated about the gas supply to Melitopol. One report says that gas and telephone connections were turned off as a safety precaution, yet a spokesman for the state gas company said a Grad heat-seeking missile had hit a natural-gas pipeline in the area, cutting off all gas supplies to the city. Remarkably it was claimed that only five people died as a result of this catastrophe, one soldier from wounds, and four others from "cardiovascular attacks."

The first few explosions could be heard from as far away as Molochansk, 28 kilometres away. Some plaster fell out of the cracks in an apartment block in that city. The Mennonite Centre in Molochansk cooperated with the Mennonite Central Committee based in Zaporozhye and gave financial aid (\$1,500 USD) for immediate repair of property damage. Al Hiebert, director of the Mennonite Centre at the time, commented that the government with the army acted quickly and repaired property damage promptly.

To celebrate the bicentenary of the establishment of the Molotschna Mennonite Colony in 1804 a special academic conference was planned to be held in Melitopol 2-5 June 2004. Because the major hotels were filled with specialists dealing with the aftermath of the munitions depot fire, the venue of most of the sessions had to be moved to the Intourist Hotel in Zaporozhye. One day, June 4, two busloads of participants met at the Melitopol State Pedagogical University.

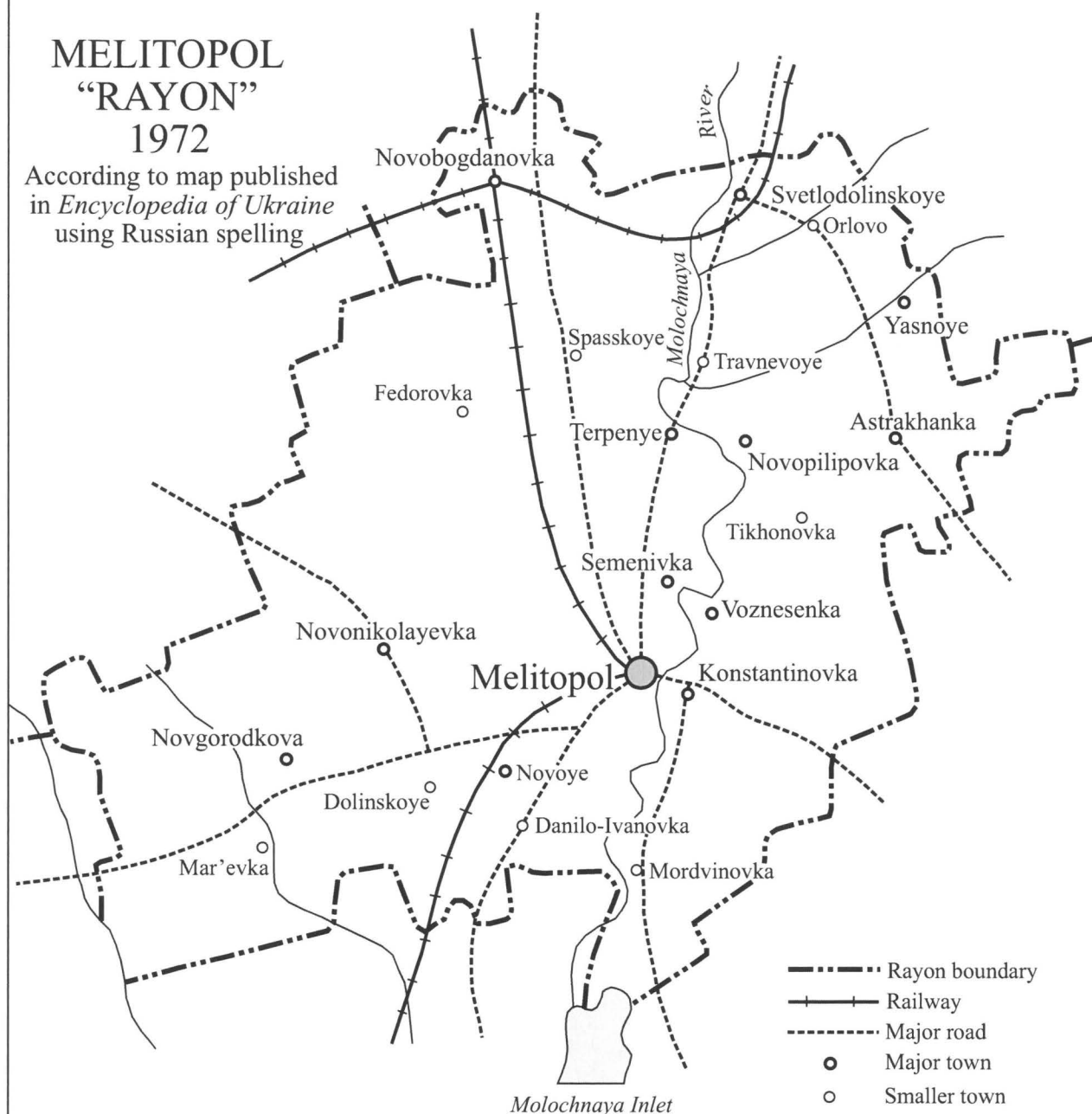
The current population of Melitopol is 175,000. The city continues to be the regional centre for educational and scientific endeavors; it is also known for its light industry and food processing capacity.



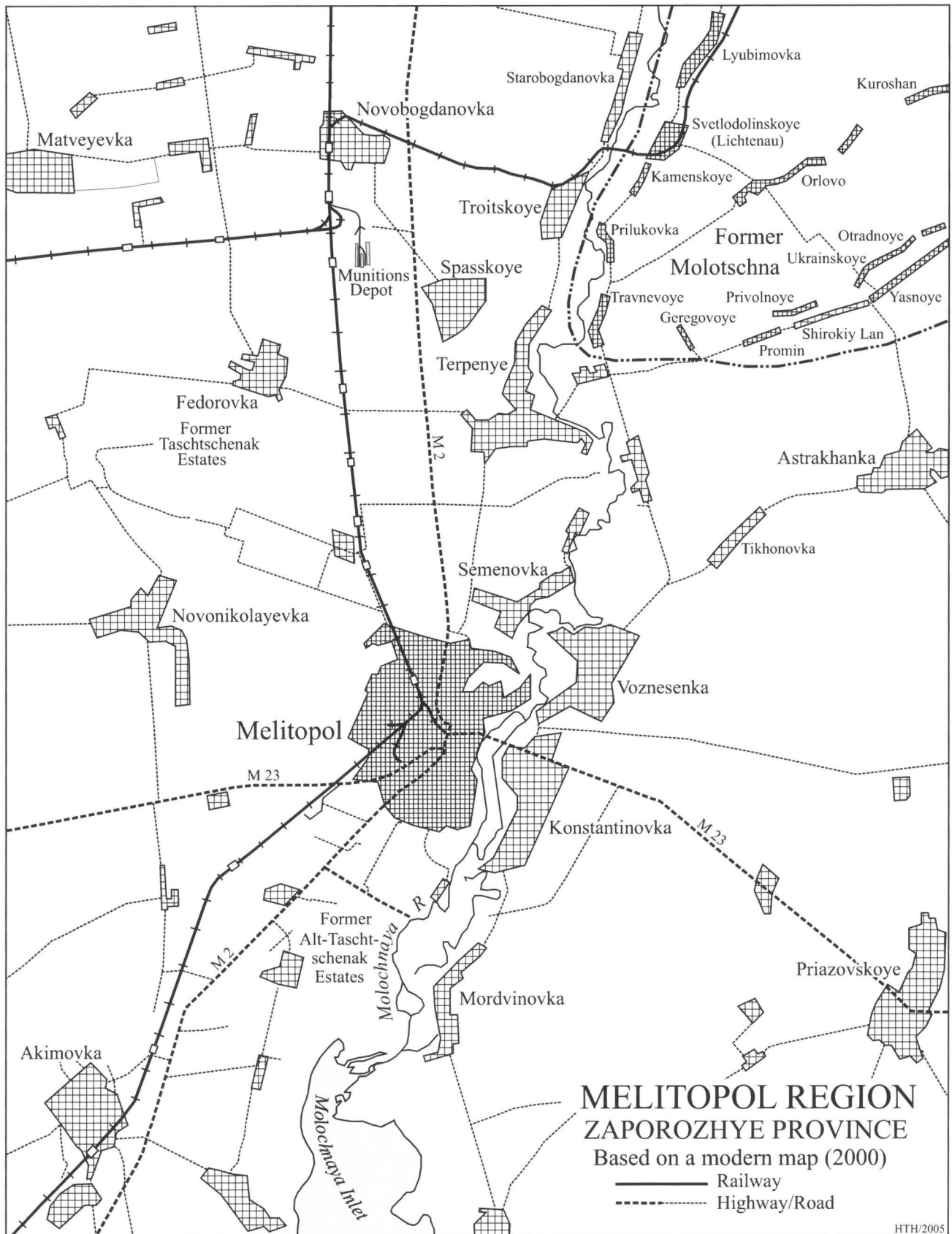


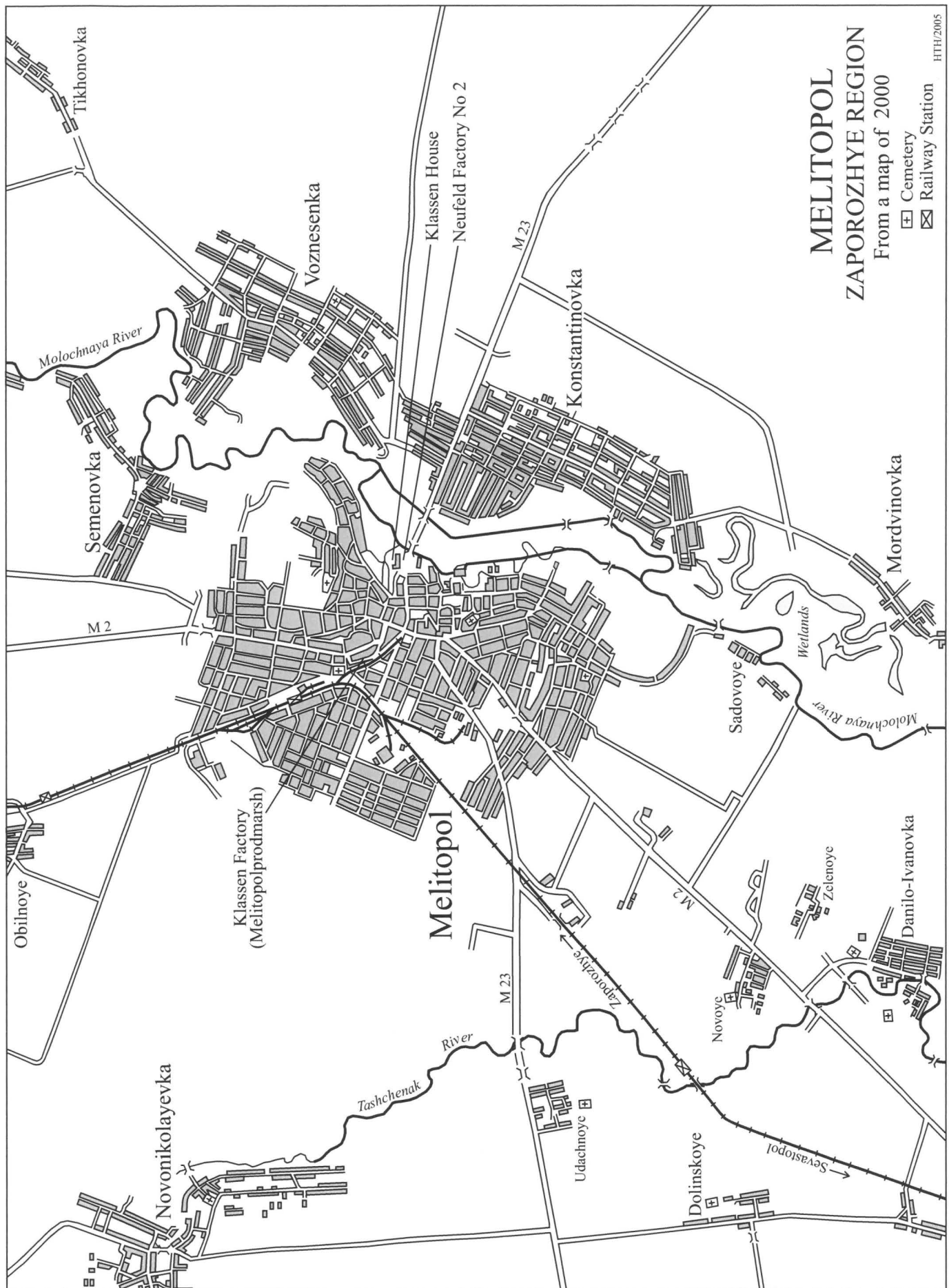
# MELITOPOL "RAYON" 1972

According to map published  
in *Encyclopedia of Ukraine*  
using Russian spelling

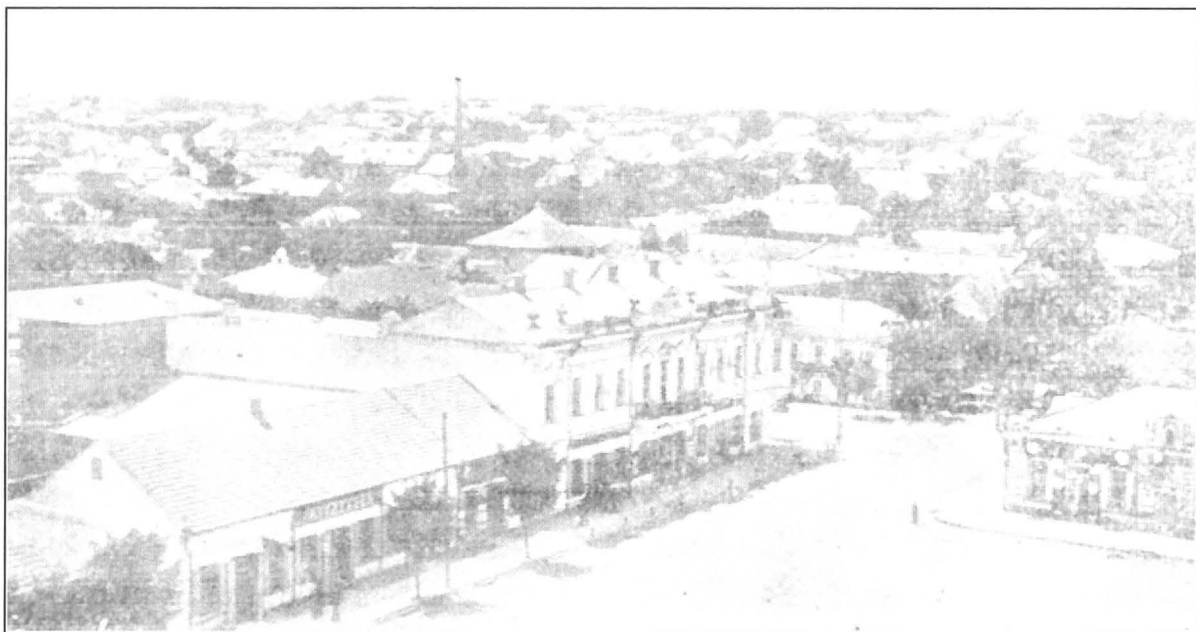


HTH/2005





Melitopol about 1900

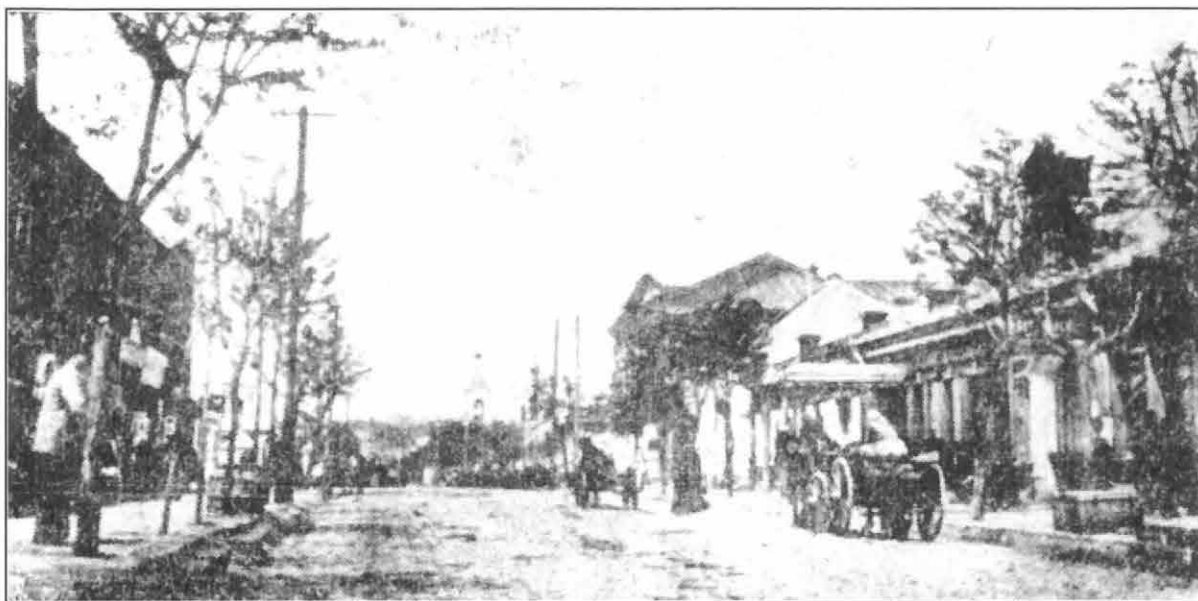


Marinsky Prospekt from Voronovsky Street



*Zhensky Gymnasium* (Secondary School) on Boulevard Street

Melitopol about 1900



Alexandrovsk Street



Marinsky Prospect Cathedral



Street in Melitopol in 1918



Folk singer on a street in Melitopol



## LIST OF PEOPLE

(People who at one time lived in Melitopol)  
(Each name will appear in **bold** print only once)

According to Heinrich J Thiessen 25 Mennonite families lived in Melitopol in 1902. For this list we have identified at least 198 individuals having spent some time in Melitopol. It is at times difficult to tell if the people actually lived in the city Melitopol, or if they lived on an estate in the region, since the terms were often used rather loosely.

### **Bergen, Bernhard**

In 1922 applied for food drafts for 5 people through the *Mennonitische Rundschau*

Presumably **wife and 3 children**

Address: Meschevaya No 17

Request directed to Dietrich Heinrich Enns of Kansas (formerly Molotschna)

### **Boldt, Heinrich**

Wife **Mrs Boldt**

Celebrated their silver wedding anniversary in Melitopol 13 November 1902

### **Boldt, Johann**

Wife **Anna Rempel**

In 1922 applied for food drafts for 17 people through the *Mennonitische Rundschau*

Presume request is either for extended family or an institution

Address: Meschevaya

Request directed to uncle of wife Anna, Heinrich Teichrieb of Los Angeles, California  
(formerly Pordenau, Taurida)

### **Bonnellis, J**

Volunteered for *Sanitaetsdienst* on the first day of World War I

### **Daniels, Gerhard Peter**

In 1922 applied for food drafts for 4 people through the *Mennonitische Rundschau*

Presumably **wife and 2 children**

Address: Voksalraya No 510

Request directed to Jakob Johann Dueck, California (formerly Muensterberg, Taurida)

### **Doerksen, David David**

In 1922 applied for food drafts for 3 people through the *Mennonitische Rundschau*

Presumably **wife and 1 child**

Address: Fedorovskaya No 589

Request directed to Gerhard Peter Neufeld, New York (formerly Blumstein, Taurida)

### **Doerksen, Jakob David**

In 1922 applied for food drafts for 7 people through the *Mennonitische Rundschau*

Presumably **wife and 5 children**

Address: Fedorovskaya No 606

Request directed to Gerhard Peter Neufeld, New York (formerly Blumstein, Taurida)

### **Dueck, Johann Johann**

Born about 1823

Wife **Margaretha** - born about 1825

Children:

**Johann** - born about 1850

**Jakob** - born about 1852

Moved from Muensterberg, Molotschna to Melitopol by 1852

Oil press operator in Melitopol

### **Duerksen, Johann (Hans)**

Born 6 April 1902

Parents Johann Duerksen and Katharina Heinrichs

Johann was the fourth of 13 children (of which only 6 reached adulthood)

Student in *Lehrerseminar* at the University of Simferopol in 1924

Became a teacher in Crimea

Married Anna Neufeld 6 April 1927 in Menlertschik

They had 2 children

Not a church member, was a government employee, so he could not immigrate when his parents left in 1929, arriving in Paraguay in 1930

He was imprisoned in Melitopol during the "Great Purge"

Sentenced to death on 23 November 1937, and likely executed the same day, in Melitopol

Relatives received a letter dated 12 June 1959 that he was "Rehabilitated." His conviction had been based on unsubstantiated evidence

### **Ediger, Salomon Salomon**

Born 14 November 1876 in Gnadenfeld, Molotschna

Parents Salomon Ediger and Susanna Mierau

Attended school in Gnadenfeld, then taught elementary school there for several years

Studied theology at the *Predigerschule* in Basel

For many years taught religion and German at the Ohrloff *Zentralschule*, succeeding Kornelius B Unruh

Preached a very powerful sermon at the *Allgemeiner Mennonitischer Kongress* held in Ohrloff 14-18 August 1917

Married the daughter of Missionary Heinrich Dirks, they had some children, she died in 1924

With Communist takeover teaching of religion was prohibited, so he gave up his ministerial status, and taught only German and some other subjects

Unable, because of his faith, to join the atheistic league, so he lost his position

To support his family he accepted position as instructor in the culture of silk

In 1934 arrested, sentenced to 5 years in exile

Returned to Melitopol in 1939 in broken health, and died 16 November 1940

With German advance toward Melitopol in August 1941 **his children** were sent into exile

### **Enns, Isaak**

Born about 1794

Wife **Susanna** - born about 1808

Children:

**Jakob** - born about 1832

**Susanna** (foster daughter) - born about 1829

Operated an oil mill by 1852

Moved from Tiege, Molotschna, to Melitopol in 1845

**Enns, Johann Gerhard Family**

Johann Gerhard Enns established Ebenhof (Enns) estate about 1882

1,293 dessiatines, raised sheep and grew grain; Johann died 1915; assets confiscated

In 1917 the family, **wife** and at least **2 children**, left the estate and moved to Melitopol, where they had some property

**Enns, J K**

Owned a mail-order business

**Esau, Cornelius**

Born 2 October 1862 in Halbstadt, Molotschna

Parents Jakob and Katharina Esau

Married **Maria Hamm** 10 January 1888

Children:

**Helena** - born 24 October 1888 in Ekaterinoslav

**Victor** - born 10 October 1890 in Ekaterinoslav

**Cornelius** - born 2 October 1893 in Melitopol, died 18 July 1916 in the war

**Wilhelm** - born 5 September 1896 in Melitopol, married Katharina Friesen,  
4 October 1932 in Winnipeg, at least 1 child, Wilhelm died 6 November 1965

The family lived in Melitopol at least when the last 2 children were born

Father Cornelius died 8 January 1920 in Rosenthal of typhus

At least some of the family immigrated to Canada

**Fast, Johann**

Wife **Mrs Fast**

Johann was a teacher of the *Realschule* in Melitopol in 1906

**“Father Jakob”**

Religion teacher at the Mennonite *Fortbildungsschule* in Melitopol in 1914

Participated in the dedication of the Mennonite Field Hospital 12 October 1914

**Friesen, Julius Julius**

Born about 1806

Wife **Katharina** - born about 1813

Children:

**Julius** - born about 1828

**Maria** - born about 1837

**Dirk** - born about 1839

**Katharina** - born about 1840

**Peter** - born about 1842

**Bernhard** - born about 1845

**Susanna** - born about 1847

Moved from Muensterberg, Molotschna, to Melitopol in 1846

Operated a treadmill in 1852

**Friesen, Lilli**

Born 25 August 1914

Lived in Melitopol 1942

Daughter **Luise** - born 7 November 1942 in Melitopol

**Friesen, Peter Julius**

Born about 1820

Wife **Anna** - born about 1820

Children:

**Peter** - born about 1846

**Anna** - born about 1848

Moved from Muensterberg, Molotschna, to Melitopol in 1846, was oil press operator

**Friesen, Peter Peter**

Born about 1799

Wife **Gertrude** - born about 1800

Daughter **Katharina** - born about 1840

Immigrated to Canada in 1924, to Acme, Alberta

**Giesbrecht, Anna**

Born about 1888; lived in Lichtenau, Molotschna

Husband Johann Giesbrecht was taken and sent to the far north or Siberia in 1931

Several months later Anna and her children were told to leave their home by the next day,  
taking 1 cow and what they could carry

Anna and her 6 children walked from Lichtenau to Melitopol

The children were: **Anna** (1910), **Louise** (1914), **Viktor** (1921), **Heinrich** (Andre)(1924)

**Elfrieda** (1926), **Harry** (1 October 1928)

There was a small Mennonite settlement in Melitopol called *Krasnaya Gorka* (Red Hill)  
where they stayed for a month or so. With the help of a Jewish family they were able  
to find a house to live in

Daughter Anna worked as an executive in a co-operative office, Louise was a clerk in a shop

After about a year, in 1932, they moved to Kamenka, then Nikopol

**Hildebrand, Dr D**

On 16 September 1914 the Melitopol Mennonite congregation decided to found a Mennonite  
field hospital to help in the war effort

Dr D Hildebrand agreed to head the hospital without any reimbursement whatever

**Hildebrand, N H**

Student at the Melitopol *Realschule*, likely in the late 1870s

**Hooze, Peter**

Wife **Maria**

**4 children**, at least 3 of which were boys

**Huebert, Heinrich Johann**

Born 6 March 1883 in Blumstein, Molotschna

Wife **Elisabeth Janzen**; **two sons**; they lived in Muensterberg

Heinrich arrested and jailed in Melitopol in 1930; exiled to Kotlas; released in 1933

Rearrested and sent into exile 5 August 1937; said to have died 18 May 1940

**Huebert, Miss**

Assistant Head Nurse at the Mennonite Field Hospital in 1914

**Janz, Benjamin Benjamin(B B)**

Born 25 September 1877 in Konteniusfeld, Molotschna

Parents Benjamin Janz and Helene Penner

Local *Dorfschule*, Gnadenfeld *Zentralschule*

Was one of a group of Mennonite young men who received special tutoring in Melitopol to help pass teaching examinations

Taught school in Tiege

Was one of those opposed to the *Selbstschutz*

He was one of the principal leaders in organizing the migration of about 22,500 Mennonites to Canada in the 1920s

Himself migrated to Canada just ahead of potential arrest, in June of 1926

He settled in Coaldale, Alberta, but continued to actively work for the welfare of Mennonites, including the founding of educational institutions and negotiating for alternate service during World War II

He died 14 October 1964

**Janzen, Gerhard**

Volunteered for *Sanitaetsdienst* on the first day of World War I

**Janzen, Heinrich Heinrich**

Born 1869

Parents Heinrich Johann Janzen and Maria Dirks

Married Susanna Friesen, daughter of P M Friesen

He was a teacher in the Deaf Mute School in Tiege

Died 1940 in Melitopol

**Janzen, Jakob**

Minister of the Melitopol congregation

Anonymous donor gave 1000 rubles to the *Bethania Heilanstalt* through Janzen in October 1911

Delivered a Russian sermon at the dedication of the Mennonite Field Hospital on 12 October 1914

**Klassen, A**

Volunteered for *Sanitaetsdienst* on the first day of World War I

**Klassen, Miss A**

Honorary nurse at the Mennonite Field Hospital in 1914

**Klassen, Abraham**

Co-owner with J Neufeld of a steam-powered flour mill

Probably had a new automatic flour mill constructed in 1913, capacity 5,000 pud daily

**Klassen, Anna**

Born 10 December 1914 in Melitopol

Married a Mr Martens

**Klassen, Jakob J**

Born 20 June 1867

Brother of Wilhelm J Klassen

Originally from Neu-Halbstadt, then moved to Melitopol

Co-owner with Wilhelm J Klassen of a factory producing agricultural machinery and equipment, established in 1886

Factory became known as *Klassen & Co. Fabrik landwirtschaftlicher Maschinen und Geraete*.

Married **Maria Schroeder** on 22 October 1892

Maria was born 27 July 1864

Children: (all born in Melitopol)

**Jakob** - born 17 August 1893

Was a driver for the Medical Corps during World War I

**David** - born 16 October 1895

Was a driver for the Medical Corps during World War I

Married Katusla Neufeld in 1923, immigrated to Brazil with family in 1930

**Peter** - born 28 October 1897

**Nikolai** - born 6 December 1899

**Maria** - born 3 March 1902

**Anna** - born 9 December 1903

Mother Maria died 19 December 1903 of complications following the birth of her last child

Jakob married again, **Marie Sudermann**

Children: (not absolutely certain of all the names; all born in Melitopol)

**Helene** (died as infant?)

**Barbara** - born 2 January 1908

**Katharina** - born 6 September 1910

Also probably **Leonard, Vanja, Klara, Katharina** and **Wilhelm**

About 1900 Jakob Klassen was mentioned as being among the most rich and influential merchants in Melitopol

Jakob was a member of the Council of the Society for the protection of wild animals

The factory was listed in the 1908 *Forstei* Taxation list as belonging to the Brothers Klassen

Jakob went to the train station 19 February 1916 to pick up two sons, Peter and Nikolai, when he suddenly fell, and died of a heart attack; he apparently had a long-standing heart condition. Funeral and burial were 24 February 1916

### **Klassen, Johann**

Moved from Melitopol to Sazarovka, Kharkov Province, before 1903

### **Klassen, Maria (nee Sudermann)**

In 1922 applied for food drafts for 11 people through the *Mennonitische Rundschau*

Presumably a widow with **10 children**

Address: Fedorovskaya No 593

Request directed to her Uncle Hermann Sudermann of Harvey County, Newton, Kansas

### **Klassen, Wilhelm J**

Brother of Jakob J Klassen

Likely studied in the Institute of Mining in Ekaterinoslav, trained as engineer

Originally from Neu-Halbstadt, then moved to Melitopol

Co-owner with Jakob J Klassen of a factory producing agricultural machinery and equipment, established in 1886

Not certain, but probably his wife was **Elisabeth Esau**, sister of mayor Johann Esau of

Ekaterinoslav and Jakob Esau the ophthalmologist

As a representative of the Melitopol Mennonite Church, he was at a meeting of Mennonite Churches of Russia on 5-6 May 1910, to discuss the forestry alternative service (*Forsteidienst*)

His wife's relatives, Nikolai, Gerhard and Heinrich Rempel stayed in their home when they were studying in Melitopol

October of 1916 the Klassen factory was making a lot of machine guns, mines and shrapnel

In 1919 estate owners Nikolai and Katharina Rempel, likely relatives, moved into their *Nebengebäude* when they were expelled from their estate; they stayed there until they moved to Ohrloff in 1921

Wilhelm died June 1919

**Kroeker, Dietrich Peter** (see also Millerovo, page 279)

In 1922 applied for food drafts for 5 people through the *Mennonitische Rundschau*

Wife **Katharina**, and children **Dietrich, Alexander** and **Katharina**

Address: Fedorovskaya No 609, Melitopol

Request directed to cousin Dietrich Jakob Kroeker formerly of Chortitza and uncle Jakob Johann Nickel formerly of Millerovo

**Kroeker, Peter Peter**

In 1922 applied for food drafts for 6 people through the *Mennonitische Rundschau*

Presumably **wife and 4 children**

Address: Torgovaya No 623

Request directed to cousin Johann Johann Kroeker (formerly Millerovo), cousin Dietrich Jakob Kroeker, Canada (formerly Spat, Crimea) and Jakob Jakob Merk, California (formerly Melitopol)

**Martens, Wilhelm J**

Born 21 November 1885

Married Gertrude Rempel 12 August 1909

She was the daughter of Isbrand Peter Rempel and Anna Sudermann

4 children, probably born on an estate in Taschtschenak

Wilhelm died 22 May 1922

He had to transport soldiers, and was found shot in Melitopol

Wife with 4 children immigrated to Drake, Saskatchewan in 1924

**Merk, Jakob Jakob**

Immigrated to California, USA sometime before 1922

**Neufeld, Johann**

Co-owner with A Klassen of a steam-powered flour mill

As a representative of the Melitopol Mennonite Church, he was at a meeting of Mennonite Churches of Russia on 5-6 May 1910, to discuss the forestry alternative service (*Forsteidienst*)

Probably had a new automatic flour mill constructed in 1913, capacity 5,000 pud per day

Considered to be very influential

Often visited Mennonite churches during his business travels in Europe and probably played a part in designing the church building in Melitopol (completed in 1914)



**Neufeld, Johann**

Wife **Olga Cornies**

Owner of estate Akumtasch near Melitopol, which he founded in 1912

Abandoned the estate in 1919 after repeated robberies, and moved to Melitopol

**Pauls, Heinrich J**

Age 20. Immigrated to Canada in May of 1926, settling in Speers, Saskatchewan

**Penner, Adelbert**

On 16 September 1914 the Melitopol Mennonite congregation decided to found a Mennonite field hospital to help in the war effort

Adelbert Penner allowed the use of his newly remodeled two story house free of charge

Private donations provided 15 beds and furniture; the ladies of the church supplied the linens

**Peters, Peter Kornelius**

From Paulsheim, then fled to Franztal; arrested in 1933, to Halbstadt, then jail in Melitopol

Fever from infection, then exiled to Murmansk, released, but then rearrested in 1937

Exiled to Novosibirsk; died of starvation 4 March 1938

**Plett, Gerhard Kornelius**

Minister of the Landskrone Mennonite Church, married Elisabeth Kroeker, lived in Hierschau

Arrested and jailed in Melitopol in August 1931. Tortured. Released after 5 year exile

Rearrested 20 October 1937 and sent into exile

**Rempel, Georg Nikolai**

One of 3 sons of Nikolai Isbrand Rempel and Katharina Martens who studied in Melitopol

Parents owned part of the Estate Helena-Michailovka, which was situated near Melitopol

Georg was born 15 September 1895 on the estate

*Realschule* in Melitopol 1907-1913?, also attended *Kommerzschule*, possibly also in Melitopol

While studying in Melitopol he and his brothers stayed at the Wilhelm Klassen home; they were his wife's relatives

1914-1918 was a driver/chauffeur for the Medical Corps stationed in Kamenets-Podolsk

October 1920 conscripted into the White Army as driver

Evacuated with General Wrangel's forces to Constantinople

April 1921 travelled to Athens, Venice, Frankfurt, Berlin, to Danzig, where their father had money and a business partnership

1923 immigrated to Saskatchewan, Canada; died 17 September 1979 in Welland, Ontario

**Rempel, Heinrich Nikolai**

One of 3 sons of Nikolai Isbrand Rempel and Katharina Martens

Parents owned part of the Estate Helena-Michailovka, which was situated near Melitopol

Heinrich was born 14 September 1900 on the estate

*Realschule* in Melitopol 1912 - 1916, thereafter *Kommerzschule*, likely in Melitopol 1916-1918

While studying in Melitopol he and his brothers stayed at the Wilhelm Klassen home; they were relatives of his wife

October 1920 conscripted into the White Army as driver

Evacuated with General Wrangel's forces to Constantinople

April 1921 travelled to Athens, Venice, Frankfurt, Berlin, to Danzig, where their father had money and a business partnership

1923 immigrated to Saskatchewan, Canada, died 8 November 1975 in Fort Erie, Ontario

**Rempel, Johann Heinrich**

In 1922 applied for food drafts for 3 people through the *Mennonitische Rundschau*

Presumably **wife and 1 child**

Address: Torgovaya No 621

Request directed to Jakob Jakob Merk, California (formerly from Melitopol, Taurida)

**Rempel, Nicolai**

Born 1891 on an estate in Ekaterinoslav, married Katharina Neufeld, lived in Friedensdorf

Arrested several times, jailed in Melitopol; worked as carpenter

Something went wrong with construction; arrested, jailed in Waldheim, exiled

**Rempel, Nikolai Isbrand**

Born 18 January 1867 in Berdyansk

Parents Isbrand Peter Rempel and Susanna Wiens

Married **Katharina Johanna Martens** 6 February 1892, likely on Estate Helena-Michailovka

She was born 25 November 1872 in Halbstadt, Molotschna

Her parents were Johann Johann Martens and Katharina Esau

Katharina inherited part of Estate Helena-Michailovka (300 dess), which was near Melitopol

They first lived in Schoenwiese, then moved onto the estate by 1895

Nikolai also was involved in business, having some money and business partners in Danzig

Children:

Nikolai - born 3 February 1893 in Schoenwiese (see separate listing)

**Olga** - born 17 August 1894 on Estate Helena-Michailovka, schooled by private tutors on the estate, *Maedchenschule* in Ohrloff, sewing school in Ekaterinoslav, moved with family, to Canada in 1924, died 9 June 1981 in St Catherines

Georg - born 15 September 1895 on Estate Helena-Michailovka (see separate listing)

Vera - died young, likely on the estate

**Johann** - likely born on the estate, died young

Heinrich - born 14 September 1900 on Estate Helena-Michailovka (see separate listing)

**Vera** - born 6 April 1903 on Estate Helena-Michailovka, schooling in Taschtschenak with a teacher Peters, schooling interrupted by Civil War, moved with family, to Canada in 1924, stayed single, died 20 November 1963 in Toronto, Canada

Sons Nikolai, Georg and Heinrich went to school in Melitopol, staying with a relative, Wilhelm J Klassen

1917 Nikolai, wife Katharina and the 2 daughters, Olga and Vera, were evicted from their estate, moved to Akimovka, south of Melitopol

1919 moved to Melitopol, staying with the Wilhelm J Klassens (in a *Nebengebeude*)

1921 moved to Ohrloff, Molotschna

1922-23 Nikolai managed the MCC kitchen in Ohrloff

1924 family immigrated to Canada, first to Drake, Saskatchewan

Katharina died in Drake, Saskatchewan, 10 September 1928

Father Nikolai died 8 June 1941 in Niagara-on-the-Lake, Ontario

**Rempel, Nikolai Nikolai**

One of 3 sons of Nikolai Isbrand Rempel and Katharina Martens

Parents owned part of the Estate Helena-Michailovka, which was situated near Melitopol  
Nikolai was born 3 February 1893 in Schoenwiese. His parents must have moved onto the  
estate sometime before 1895

*Realschule* in Melitopol 1905-1911; attended *Kommerzschule*, possibly in Melitopol as well  
While studying in Melitopol he and his brothers stayed at the Wilhelm J Klassen home; they  
were relatives of his wife

1914-1918 was a chauffeur for the Medical Corps, stationed in the Crimea, mostly Yalta  
October 1920 conscripted into the White Army as driver

April 1921 travelled to Athens, Venice, Frankfurt, Berlin, to Danzig, where their father had  
money and a business partnership

1923 immigrated to Saskatchewan, Canada

Died 16 February 1969 in Niagara-on-the-Lake, Ontario

**Schroeder, Heinrich Peter**

In 1922 applied for food drafts for 5 people through the *Mennonitische Rundschau*

Presumably **wife and 3 children**

Address: Torgovaya No 637

Request directed to Heinrich Peter Goertz of Mountain Lake, Minnesota

Again requested food drafts for 5 people *Mennonitische Rundschau*

This time request directed to Widow Peter Abraham Dick of Los Angeles, California

**Sudermann, Widow Bernhard**

Lived in Melitopol in 1902

**Sudermann, J**

Medical student assigned to help Dr D Hildebrand in the management of the Mennonite Field  
Hospital in 1914

**Sudermann, Jakob Johann**

Born 11 September 1876 in Alexanderthal, Molotschna

Parents Minister Johann Sudermann and Aganetha Riediger

Attended local *Dorfschule*, Gnadenfeld *Zentralschule*

Took private tutoring in Melitopol, together with some other Mennonite young men, to help  
him pass the examinations to become teachers

Taught in Neu Samara, Davlekanovo; became minister; exiled; survived exile, but was ill  
and likely died

**Sudermann, Peter**

Student in a technical school in Berdyansk in 1941

Fled from Berdyansk to Melitopol, hoping to be in German occupied territory sooner by  
fleeing westward. The German advance stalled before it reached Melitopol, so Peter hid  
in the city for a week or two in the middle of September 1941

Went back to Berdyansk. Eventually the German advance reached even there.

**Teske, Miss M**

Head Nurse at the Mennonite Field Hospital in 1914

Originally from the Ohrloff-Tiege Hospital

**Thiessen, Heinrich**

Lived in Melitopol in 1902

**Thomsen, Heinrich Gerhard**

In 1922 applied for food drafts for 6 people through the *Mennonitische Rundschau*

Presumably had **wife and 4 children**

Address: Meschvaya Haus Isayev No 3

Request directed to brother-in-law Jakob Philipp Wiebe, North America ( formerly Kuban)  
and nephews and nieces Abram Bekker and siblings of Goessel, Kansas

**Toews, Peter Jakob**

Born 27 January 1897 in Ohrloff, Molotschna, married **Elisabeth Janzen** of Ohrloff

Minister and choir conductor; 1932 arrested, 3 years hard labour near the White Sea

Released 1937, lived and worked in Melitopol, rearrested and exiled December 1937

**Voth, Peter Andreas**

In 1922 applied for food drafts for 5 people through the *Mennonitische Rundschau*

Presumably **wife and 3 children**

Address: Fedorovskaya No 593

Request directed to cousin Abraham Jakob Voth, North America (formerly Waldheim, Taurida)  
and cousin Johann Dueck, New York (formerly steam mill owner in Pastwa, Taurida)

**Wall, Johann Jakob**

Immigrated to Canada, landing on 24 October 1925

**Wallmann, Mr**

Wife **Mrs Wallmann**

Daughter **Maria** born 17 May 1917

**Wallmann, Peter**

Volunteered for *Sanitaetsdienst* on the first day of World War I

**Warkentin, Jakob**

Lived in Melitopol in 1902

Owner of a steam-powered flour mill and oil press in 1908

**Warkentin, Jakob (Jr)**

Volunteered for *Sanitaetsdienst* on the first day of World War I

**Warkentin, J J**

Wife **Helena Graewe**

At one time lived in Melitopol, then immigrated to Hillsboro, Kansas

**Wiens, Nikolai Johann**

Wife **Margaretha Janzen**

Daughter **Katharina**, daughter **Anna**, niece **Maria Guenther**

Nikolai and Margaretha Wiens of Berdyansk brought their daughter Katharina to Melitopol to see Dr Renius because of problems with her eyes in August of 1867. They left Berdyansk 8 AM, arriving in Melitopol at 5:30 PM. Stayed in the Golden Anchor Hotel overnight, then took up lodging in a private house across the street from the doctor's office. Eyes improved; returned home in about 2 months. Back again February 1868, staying in the home of Dr Renius for some months. Sister Anna and cousin Maria Guenther stayed with Katharina.

**Willms, David**

Volunteered for *Sanitaetsdienst* on the first day of World War I



Brothers Klassen  
Factory owners



Johann Fast and his wife. Johann was  
teacher in the *Realschule* in 1906



Maria and Peter Hooe with children



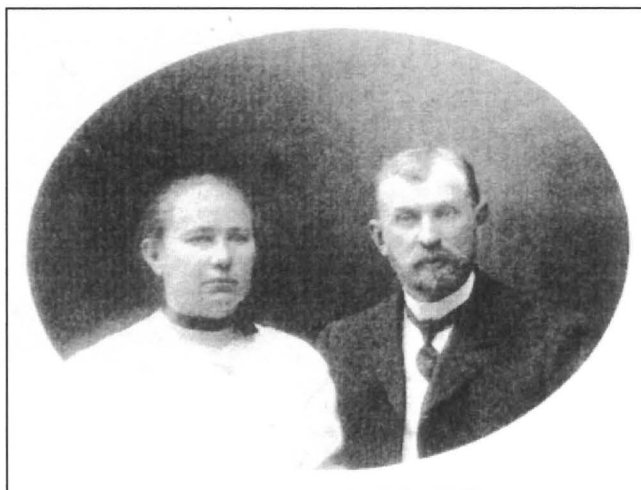
Dr Viktor Klets of Dnepropetrovsk  
speaking at the "Molochna 2004"  
conference



The Nikolai Isbrand Rempel family in Melitopol in 1918. Back row l-r Nikolai Isbrand Rempel, Heinrich Rempel, Katharina Rempel, Olga Rempel, Middle row, Georg Rempel, Vera Rempel, Front seated, Nikolai Rempel (Jr), standing German/Austrian officer



Jakob, David and Peter Klassen, sons of Jakob J Klassen and first wife Marie Schroeder, 1900



Jakob J Klassen and his second wife Marie Sudermann

## MENNONITE INSTITUTIONS

### *Fortbildungsschule* (Secondary School)

At the Field Hospital dedication service it was mentioned that "Father Jakob" was the teacher of Religion at the Mennonite *Fortbildungsschule*. He was the first speaker at the service, and dedicated the facility

### Mennonite Field Hospital

On 16 September 1914 the members of the Melitopol Mennonite congregation met to discuss the founding of a Mennonite field hospital as tangible evidence of wanting to help in the war effort, in a humanitarian way

The idea was immediately accepted in principle

Practical aspects of the project were dealt with

Adelbert Penner allowed the use of his newly remodeled two-story house free of charge

Private donations provided 15 beds and essential furniture

Ladies of the church supplied the necessary linens

Voluntarily imposed dues by the members of the congregation raised the 600 rubles per month needed to maintain the facility

Dr D Hildebrand agreed to head the hospital without any reimbursement whatever

All members of the congregation left the meeting feeling that they had contributed something towards healing the wounds of the sick and infirm

The hospital was dedicated 12 October 1914. A number of officials, including the mayor and the head of the local medical corps, attended. "Father Jakob," religion teacher of the Mennonite *Fortbildungsschule*, actually dedicated the facility. Jakob Janzen, minister of the local congregation, speaking in Russian, mentioned the obligations to the Fatherland in "flowing words" and praised the generous hospitality which Russia had offered them.

Assisting Dr Hildebrand in the management of the hospital was medical student J Sudermann; Honorary Nurse was Miss A Klassen, head nurse Miss M Teske and assistant head nurse Miss Huebert. With the arrival of six *Sanitaeter* the hospital complement was complete, and patients could be accepted.

### Melitopol Mennonite Church

Melitopol served as a trading centre for the surrounding area, including the western villages of the Molotschna Colony and the surrounding Mennonite estates

Mennonite families may have settled in Melitopol as early as 1845; by 1852 Isaak Enns operated an oil press in the city. Other trades-people and industrialists moved in over the years, such as Jakob and Wilhelm Klassen, who came from Neu-Halbstadt in 1886 to establish an agricultural machinery factory that year

Melitopol was the site of a *Realschule*, where Mennonite students attended, perhaps as early as the 1870s; there was at least one Mennonite teacher, Johann Fast, in 1906

Some Mennonites from the surrounding area also did their banking in Melitopol, and



were taken to the city for medical care after serious injuries

It is not known exactly when a Mennonite church was officially organized in Melitopol. By 1910, however, the congregation sent delegates Wilhelm Klassen and Johann Neufeld as representatives to the meeting of all Mennonite churches of Russia on 5-6 May 1910 to discuss the *Forestei* alternative service. Melitopol was, at the meeting, designated as one of the centres for collecting the appropriate taxes for this service

The congregation decided to build a sanctuary, the construction of which was begun in 1913.

The design was generally based on the Mennonite Church of Montau, West Prussia, although various features evolved as members saw churches in other parts of Europe. Mill owner J Neufeld was particularly influential in this regard. Members were especially proud that this was the first Mennonite church in Russia to receive government approval for a bell tower and a church bell. The bell tower needed to be particularly tall and wide to accommodate the bell poured in Berlin by Georg Richter. The church building was dedicated on 20 April 1914. The sanctuary was shared with the local Lutheran congregation.

With the outbreak of World War I, Melitopol Mennonites seem to have wanted to show their fervent loyalty to the Fatherland. A number of Mennonites volunteered for the *Sanitaetsdienst* on the first day of the war. It is not certain that these were official members of the church. Listed as signing up were: A Klassen, Jakob Warkentin (Jr), David Willms, Gerhard Janzen, Peter Wallmann and J Bonnellis

The Mennonite congregation met on 16 September 1914, about a month after the declaration of war, to discuss establishment of a Mennonite Field Hospital. This was meant to show support for the Fatherland, in a humanitarian way. The idea was accepted in principle, then followed by arrangements for its implementation. Adelbert Penner offered a house; furniture was donated; linens were supplied by the ladies. Dr D Hildebrand agreed to be the director, and the members accepted a levy of cash to finance the project. The hospital was dedicated 12 October 1914.

Jakob Janzen was then a minister of the Melitopol congregation. At the dedication of the field hospital he delivered a Russian sermon.

During the anarchy following the Revolution some members of the congregation lost their lives through Makhno terror in the spring of 1919

The church building was closed in the winter of 1923-1924 when the members did not "register it promptly" in accordance with new regulations. They did not have the funds for either the registration, nor for renewing the contract. A large part of the membership belonged to the worker class, most of whom were unfortunately unemployed at the time. Other contributing factors were that most of the members lived at least 1-2 verst from the church, and that sermons were read, rather than actually preached, and therefore were not as heart-warming. Added to this was the fact that it was difficult to heat the church in winter. In short, the authorities closed the church building, and declared the congregation disbanded. At the time the church did not have the resources, either economic or spiritual, to counteract the authorities.

Those who still wished to hear the Word of God visited the Russian Evangelical Church.

Occasionally when Mennonite ministers visited the area special German services were

held in the building, at times when the sanctuary was not otherwise used. From some outside source additional funding was made available, and the authorities actually were quite cooperative, so that after 1½ years, on Sunday 9 August 1925, the building was opened and a church service held. The following Sunday, August 16, David H Epp, Minister from the Lichtenau congregation in the Molotschna, preached in both the morning and afternoon services. On August 23 Elder A Klassen of the Halbstadt congregation preached in the morning service, then conducted a wedding ceremony in the afternoon. The congregation realized that the train connections for the ministers were somewhat awkward, but greatly appreciated the input. Apparently the 12 ministers of the Lichtenau congregation resolved to each travel to Melitopol once a year; this resolution was, however, difficult to carry out consistently. Poor weather, health problems and scheduling conflicts often conspired to leave the congregation to its own devices. They then continued to have services, but read the sermons and had their own choir sing.

On 17 October 25 Minister Schmidt of Altona and Nickel of Ohrloff preached. Easter of 1926 Schmidt and Nickel returned, this time with the 30-voice choir from Altona. The Saturday evening and the Sunday morning services were highlights.

In May of 1926 two men and two women were baptized and joined the church. Over time a considerable number of ministers came to serve the congregation. These included Kornelius K Martens, G Flamming, Wiens, as well as David H Epp, Schmidt and Nickel on a number of occasions.

The last major Mennonite conference held in Russia was in Melitopol. The “All Ukrainian Mennonite General Conference” was held in the church 5-9 October 1926, about 20 months after the previous one was held in Moscow. It was attended by 83 delegates from Ukraine and 14 Mennonite guests from other parts of Russia; they represented 22,380 members. Proceedings were monitored by two government observers. Jakob Rempel of Gruenfeld was elected chairman; P Penner of Lichtfelde delivered the keynote address. Various subjects were discussed, but the overriding thought was that all Mennonite congregations needed to mutually support each other and cooperate in view of the evident adversity.

Presumably the congregation ceased to function about 1930. The building no longer exists. This congregation seemed to be somewhat unique, and possibly suffered as a result of having no dynamic ministerial leadership throughout its existence.



The Mennonite church in Melitopol, dedicated on 20 April 1914. A Lutheran congregation also used the building for worship services

## MENNONITE EVENTS IN MELITOPOL

### All-Ukrainian Mennonite General Conference (*Allukrainische Mennonitische Bundeskonferenz*)

Held in the Melitopol Mennonite Church 5-9 October 1926

There were 83 delegates from congregations in Ukraine, and 14 guests from other parts of Russia; they represented 22,380 members. Also present were two government officials sent to monitor the conference - Kotelnikovo and Schoen.

Delegates were very conscious of the immensity of the obligations and the tasks that lay before them. It was repeatedly emphasized that the purpose was to honour God and his Word, to build new foundations for the common work of furthering the Kingdom of God.

The conference was opened October 5 by Alexander Ediger, Chairman of the *Kommission fuer Kirchenangelegenheiten (KfK)*. He read the official government consent, issued on 16 August 1926, allowing the conference to proceed according to regulation No 21404.

Minister P Penner of Lichtfelde delivered the keynote address, basing it on Acts 2:42 and Titus 2:13. He felt that the purpose of the conference was to build each other up in the faith and to find ways and means to further the kingdom of God.

The executive was elected; it consisted of Jakob Rempel of Gruenfeld, Johann Toews of Ignatyev, Peter Nickel of Ohrloff and Jakob Paetkau of Memrik. Other positions such as secretaries were also filled. While positions were filled by capable men, it was noted throughout the conference that many of the leaders of the congregations were missing, having recently immigrated to Canada.

Reports were heard from the *KfK*; the various regions shared their experiences. Some of the 14 guests reported on events from Mennonite settlements beyond the borders of Ukraine. The need for founding a Bible school was discussed, and the motion to do so was passed. Youth work was considered to be essential. Government monitor Schoen reminded the delegates that it was illegal to provide Christian education for any child under the age of 18, and that some of the suggestions would be in violation of this regulation. He even considered the implied instruction at church choir practices to fall into this category. Despite these warnings the delegates voted to request permission to again allow religious instruction for children.

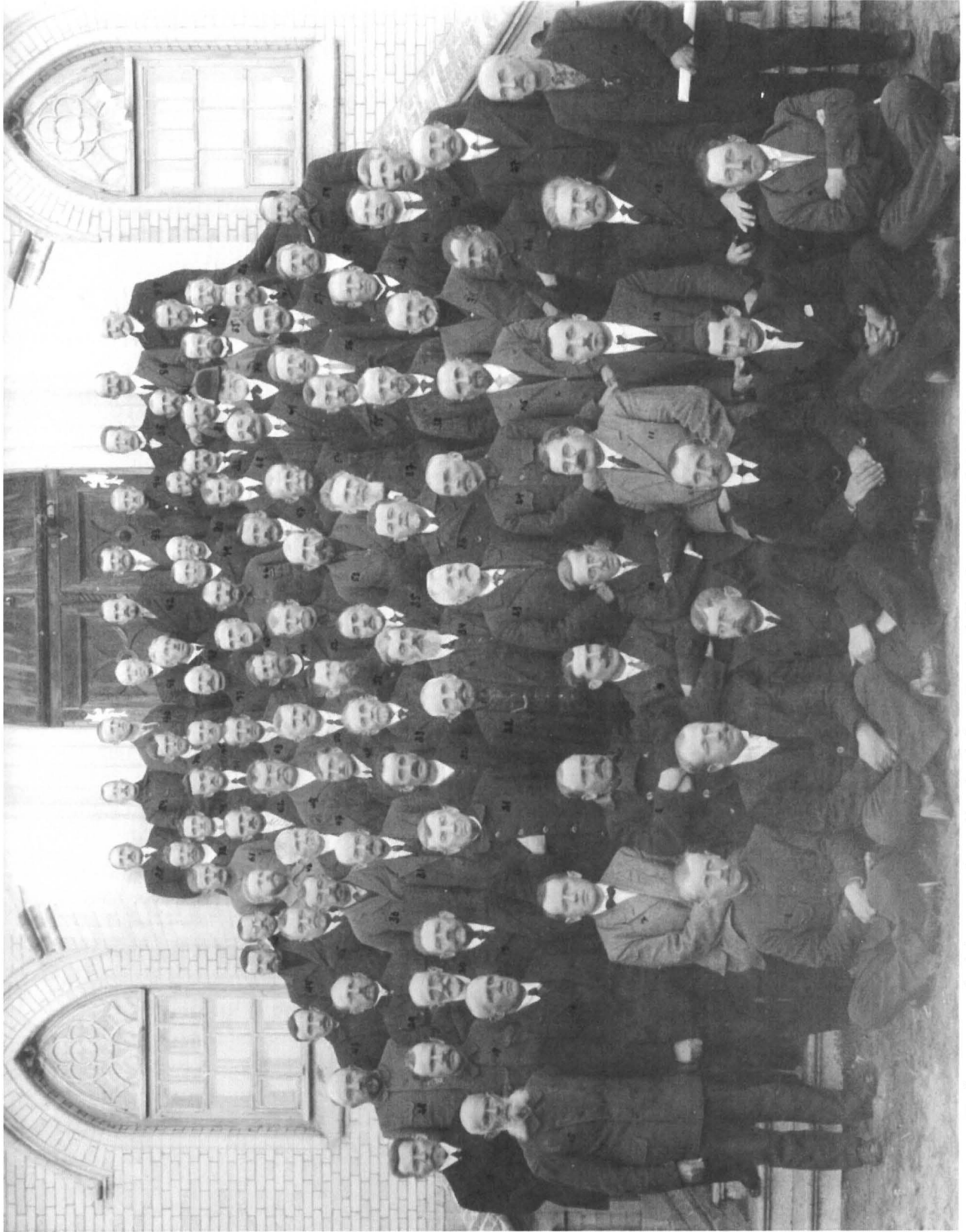
The *KfK* was busy producing songbooks, recently having printed 3,000 at the cost of 2,000 rubles. The monthly publication *Unser Blatt* reported that the principal request was to be published more often. It was said to be impossible due to shortage of paper. By a unanimous vote the delegates passed a motion that when the paper shortage eased *Unser Blatt* should be published twice a month. Government monitor Kotelnikovo suggested that the publication needed to obtain official government permission to send the paper beyond the borders of Ukraine. This comment illustrated the fact that the real reason for only appearing monthly was not lack of paper, but ongoing government interference.

Members of the various commissions were elected and statistical reports given. Total number of Mennonites in Ukraine at the time was 46,829, of whom 38,039 were

labeled *Kirchliche*, 7,242 Mennonite Brethren and 1,548 Free Church. The conference thanked the local congregation for its friendly hospitality. The mandatory picture was taken of the delegates on the church steps. There are 97 on the picture, representing all those who participated in the conference. It should be noted that the request to allow religious instruction of children under the age of 18 was not granted. The proposed Bible school was not allowed to open. An ominous sign of things to come was the arrest, during the conference sessions, of H Reimer of Rueckenau. He had issued birth certificates; for this he was sentenced to a month of hard labour and the Rueckenau congregation was dissolved. This was the last general conference held by the Mennonites in Russia

### **Molochna Mennonites and their Neighbours, 1804-2004**

An academic conference was planned to celebrate the 200-year anniversary of the establishment of the Molotschna Mennonite Colony To be held in Melitopol 2-5 June 2004. A large munitions depot burned and exploded just about 20 km north of Melitopol, the fires starting at noon 6 May, and continuing on for a number of days. The venue of the conference had to be moved because the major Melitopol hotel was fully booked with blast specialists from Kiev and elsewhere. Most of the conference then took place at the Intourist Hotel in Zaporozhye. Participants were taken by buses to the Melitopol Pedagogical University for one day, Friday 4 June. The conference was co-chaired by John Staples of New York State University, and Nikolai Krylov of the University of Melitopol. In all, 33 papers were presented in 13 sessions. Scholars came from Austria, Canada, Germany, Netherlands, Paraguay, Russia, Ukraine and the United States. A wide spectrum of subjects on all aspects of the history of Molotschna Mennonites and their interaction with their neighbours was presented. Two-thirds of the papers were presented by Ukrainian and Russian scholars. John Staples delivered the keynote address "Putting 'Russia' back into Russian Mennonite history." He said that Mennonite historians "have told and retold this story countless times, but even the best of them have told it as an exclusively Mennonite story." Nikolai Krylov discussed "The Role of Molochna Mennonites in the Formation of the Settlement Network in the Zaporozhye/Azov Region." The final conference session on June 5 dealt with topics relating to music and literary culture. Peter Letkemann of Winnipeg presented a paper on "Heinrich Franz and the origins of the *Ziffern* system." Well known novelist Rudy Wiebe, a leading contributor to the "structure of fiction" surrounding the Russian Mennonite story, wondered what his own father would have said if Joseph Stalin himself had offered him back his own farm in Russia. After closing observations by historian David Sudermann, some of the delegates headed off to the railway station at Lichtenau (Svetlodolinskoye) for the dedication of two memorial benches. These benches are meant to remind visitors of the great significance of the Lichtenau station in the lives of many Mennonites; for some it was going on to a land of hope, but for many it was heading to the wilderness of suffering and despair.



Delegates and visitors at the All-Ukrainian General Conference held in Melitopol 5-9 October 1926



## MENNONITE BUSINESS

It is interesting to note that there were very many advertisements placed in the *Christlicher Familienkalender* by non-Mennonite business of Melitopol directed to Mennonites. There were no actual advertisements in this widely read publication, however, placed by Mennonite business establishments situated in Melitopol.

### **Enns, Isaak**

Operated an oil mill by 1852

### **Enns, J K**

Owned a mail-order business

### **Friesen, Julius Julius**

Came to Melitopol in 1846. Operated a treadmill in 1852

### **Klassen Abraham and Neufeld Johann**

Owned a steam-powered flour mill

In 1908 the business was valued at 20,000 rubles

Probably had a new mill built about 1913

"Anton Erlanger & Co" of Kharkov used a picture of the mill to advertise that they constructed automatic flour mills

Capacity of the new mill posted as 5,000 pud per day

### **Klassen, Jakob J and Klassen Wilhelm J**

Klassen brothers were co-owners of a factory producing agricultural machinery and equipment  
Established in 1886

Known as *Klassen & Co. Fabrik landwirtschaftlicher Maschinen und Geraete*

In 1907, at an exhibition in Neu-Halbstadt, the factory won a small gold medallion in recognition of the excellence of its products

In 1908 valued at 65,000 rubles according to the *Forstei* taxation list

In 1916 producing a lot of machine guns, mines and shrapnel

By 1925 it was nationalized and became known as the State Factory for Agricultural Machinery No 2, and by 1926 began producing equipment for mills and elevators

In 1947 it was completely refurbished to produce equipment for the food processing industry

In 1998 an open joint-stock company named *Melitopolprod mash* bought the company

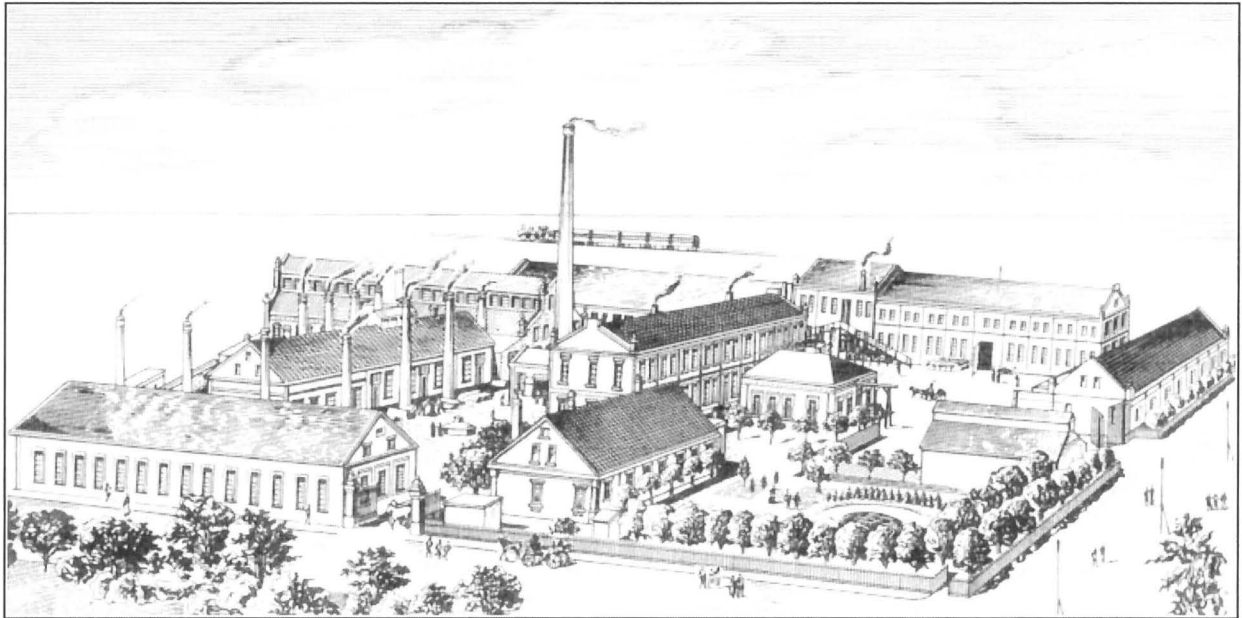
In 2005 it is listed as having a capacity to produce 1,500 to 24,000 bottles per hour for soft drinks and sodas, beer and vodka, champagne

### **Warkentin, Jakob**

Owned a steam-powered flour mill and oil press

In 1908 valued at 10,500 rubles



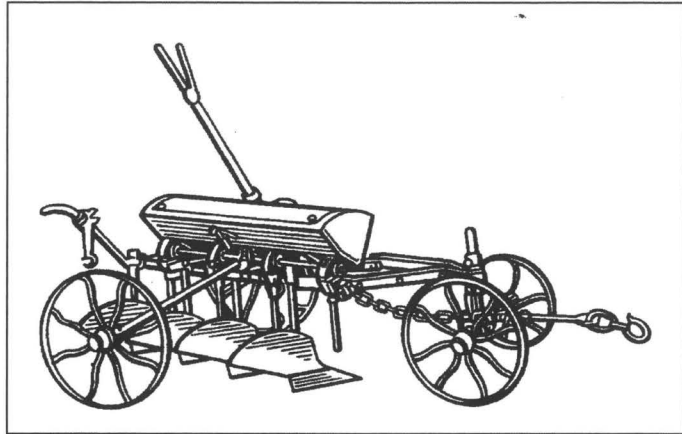


The factory of Jakob and Wilhelm Klassen in the late 1880s  
It produced agricultural machinery

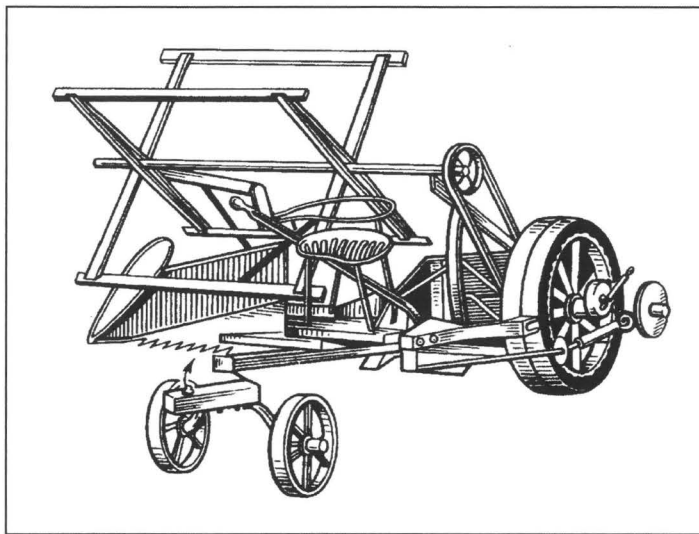


Klassen factory (Melitopolprod mash) 2005

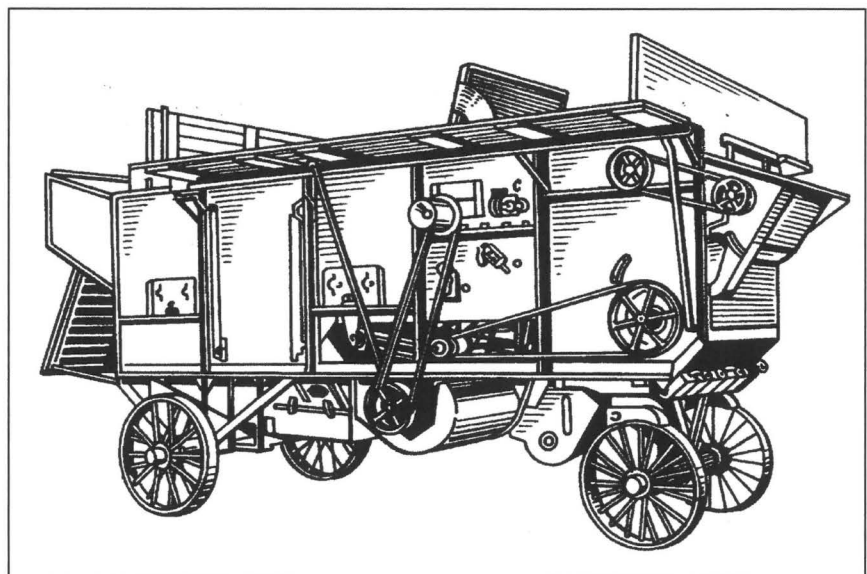
Agricultural implements  
produced by the  
Klassen factory



Four-body drill-plough



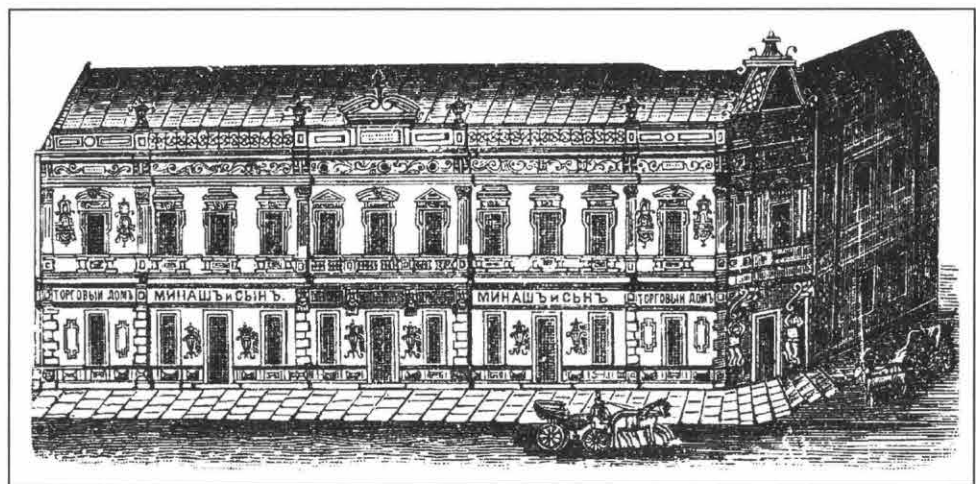
Horse-drawn reaper



European motor-driven thresher



Flour mill of Klassen and Neufeld, Melitopol, constructed by Anton Erlanger & Co of Kharkov. The mill was automatic with a capacity to produce 5,000 pud daily



M M Mynasch and Son. Dealers in cloth and furs, sewing machines, Viennese furniture, tea, sugar and coffee as well as linoleum  
Founded in 1855. Closed Saturdays  
Not a Mennonite business, but advertised a number of times in the *Christlicher Familienkalender* published in Halbstadt

## SOURCES

(for the entire Melitopol chapter)

- Bahnman, Marvin, transcriber and facilitator in the publication of "*Our Heritage: Remembrances of My Life in Russia 1866-1895, from the Diary of Katharina (Wiens) Bahnmann Dyck Regier 1859-1936*, 1997, pp 19, 22
- Berkoff, Karel C, *Harvest of Despair: Life and Death in Ukraine under Nazi Rule*, The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, Cambridge, Massachusetts and London, England, 2004, pp 12, 39, 48, 91, 196
- Cities and Villages of Ukraine*, Kiev, 1970, pp 412-416
- Der Bote*  
Refugee Lists: 8 September 1926
- Der Botschafter*  
List of donors to *Bethania Heilanstalt*, 24 February 1912, p 5
- Dzakovich, P K, *Studies of the City of Melitopol and its District: From the Geographical Point of View*, Permission given by the Census Agency, Kharkov, 20 September 1900, pictures and map from 1900
- Encyclopedia of Ukraine*, University of Toronto Press Incorporated, Toronto, 1993
- EWZ Lists: Mennonite extracts
- Jahresbericht des Bevollmaechtigten der Mennonitengemeinden in Russland in Sachen der Unterhaltung der Forstkommandos im Jahre 1908*, p 18
- Friedensstimme*  
Letters to the editor and advertising  
Report of the Melitopol Regional Court 30 September 1906, p 433  
Report of an Exhibition in Neu-Halbstadt, 20 October 1907, p 552-3  
Aborted Robbery, 10 November 1907, p 495  
Landwirtschaftliche Beilage, No 6, p 6, 1913; 23 July 1914, p 7;  
27 September 1914, pp 4-5; 1 November 1914, pp 5-6
- Friesen, P M, *Die Alt-Evangelische Mennonitische Bruederschaft in Russland (1789-1910)*, Raduga, Halbstadt, Taurida, 1911, pp 517, 521, 607, 640, 691, 693
- Friesen, Rudy P with Friesen, Edith Elisabeth, *Building on the Past*, Raduga Publications, Winnipeg, Canada, 2004, pp 697-99
- Giesbrecht, Harry, Winnipeg, Manitoba, personal family information
- Great Soviet Encyclopedia*
- Hiebert, Al, personal information from the Mennonite Centre, Molochansk
- Kroeker, A, *Christlicher Familienkalender*, Raduga, Halbstadt, Taurida, many pages, especially the advertising, 1901-1915
- Letskemann, Peter, "Molochna-2004: Mennonites and Their Neighbors (1804-2004)": An International Conference, Zaporizhzhia, Ukraine, June 2-5, 2004, *Mennonite Quarterly Review*, January 2005, pp 109-119
- List of Mennonites living outside the Molotschna Colony in 1852, Odessa Region State Archives, pp 3, 4
- Melitopolprodmas - Microsoft Internet Explorer: Historical references, pictures and current

- update about the company
- Mennonite Encyclopedia*, Vol 1, pp 60-61; Vol 2, p 149
- Mennonitische Rundschau*
- Letter to the editor: 1 Jan 1903, p 11
- Request list for food drafts: 19 April 1922, p 4, 5; 31 May 1922, p 13; 9 August 1922, p 9
- Refugee lists: 11 February 1925 p 14; 27 October 1926, p 10
- Sudermann, Peter, Winnipeg, Manitoba, personal information
- Toews, A A, *Mennonitische Maertyrer*, self-published, Winnipeg, Canada, 1949, p 365
- Toews, John B, *Czars, Soviets & Mennonites*, Faith and Life Press, Newton, Kansas, 1982, pp 50, 63, 66
- Unser Blatt*
- Report of the church reopening November 1925 p 28
- Advertising for the planned Melitopol conference, October 1926 p 19
- Church function since the reopening December 1926 p 82
- Reports on *Allukrainische Mennonitische Bundeskonferenz*, November 1926 pp 33-36, 46-53. Picture page 52; January 1927 pp 113-116
- Ziesmann, Hedy, St Catherines, Ontario, personal information

# Chapter IV

## MILLEROVO

### TABLE OF CONTENTS

Table of Contents.....	257
History of Millerovo.....	258
Map of Rostov-on-Don and Donetsk Region.....	261
Map of Millerovo in 1919 ( <i>Die Deutsche Strasse</i> ).....	262
Map of Civil War near Millerovo.....	263
Pictures of Millerovo 1915, 2005.....	264
List of People.....	266
Pictures of People.....	295
Mennonite Institutions.....	300
Pictures of Mennonite Brethren Church and School.....	302
Mennonite Events.....	303
Tragedy in Millerovo.....	307
Mennonite Businesses.....	308
Pictures of Business Establishments.....	312
Wilhelm Isaak Dyck (1854-1936).....	318
Cornelius Abram DeFehr (1881-1979).....	329
Kornelius Jakob Martens (1876-1974) and Maria (nee Dyck) Martens (1884-1961).....	339
Sources.....	351

## HISTORY OF MILLEROVO

Millerovo was founded in 1786 by Sargent-Major Ivan Abramovich Miller as a manor settlement. Abram was the son of a Prussian colonel, and served Peter the Great (Peter I). The Miller (Millerovo) family continued to serve the czar, one being a bandmaster in the court, another was physician to the Czarina. The family contributed a lot to the welfare of the people of Russia. As late as the early twentieth century two Miller brothers owned



The Miller (Millerovo) family in 1912



The Miller family crest

large houses in the city, one having a distinct red, the other a green roof.

In 1872 the Rostov-Voronezh-Kozlov Railway passed through Millerovo; after the construction of the railway line to Lugansk in 1898, Millerovo became an important railway junction in the Don region of South Russia. It was here that agricultural products of the upper Don region were delivered and processed to be despatched to the central provinces of Russia. It

should be noted that during the time the Mennonites lived in Millerovo, even in the times of anarchy, the railway seemed to function surprisingly well.

The city is about 18 km west of the Kalitva River, a tributary of the Donets, which flows into the Don. It is 190 km north and slightly east of Rostov-on-Don, likely somewhat more than 200 km by rail, and roughly 400 km east of Dnepropetrovsk. In 1903 Millerovo had a population of 10,000, mostly Russians, but was surrounded by German Lutheran colonies. The first pharmacy was opened in the city in 1899. Mineral water was sold, presumably to bolster the health of the citizens. In 1904 Nurse Kobzov claimed to cure both humans and animals with equal skill.

In the late nineteenth and early twentieth century, probably because of the excellent rail connections, Millerovo built steam mills, oil mills, an elevator, an oil pressing factory and an ironworks. Mennonites played an important part in these developments.

The first Mennonites settled in Millerovo in 1903; they were David J Klassen, Wilhelm J Friesen, Johann Nickel, J Siemens and Wilhelm I Dyck. Friesen and Dyck owned a business in Petrovka of the Naumenko Colony, which they sold as they settled in Millerovo. In the next decade a considerable Mennonite business presence developed. There were four flour mills, one factory, three implement repair shops and one implement dealership. These businesses were located on *Nemetskaya Uliza*, "*die Deutsche Strasse*." The business group was known as the "*Millerovo*



*Geschaefstgruppe.*” Although the Mennonite group, both owners and workers, lived a fairly segregated life, being established on the edge of the city in their own section, relations with the surrounding Russians were fairly good. This applied especially to the Cossacks, who, for example, in the Revolution of 1905, assured the Mennonites that they had nothing to fear.

In 1903 the initial group, Klassen, Friesen, Nickel, Siemens and Dyck established a steam-driven flour mill, in time owned and operated by Dyck and Friesen. In 1908 these two constructed a six-story building using imported American machinery. In 1904 Kornelius Martens and Cornelius A DeFehr, sons-in-law of Wilhelm Dyck, established a large agricultural machinery factory, which in time also produced other industrial machinery. At its most flourishing time the factory employed up to 200 workers and did one million rubles-worth of business in a year. At least two more flour mills were constructed by Mennonites. The mill owned by Jakob Nickel was valued at 10,000 rubles in 1908. Peter Schroeder owned a flour mill and an oil press.

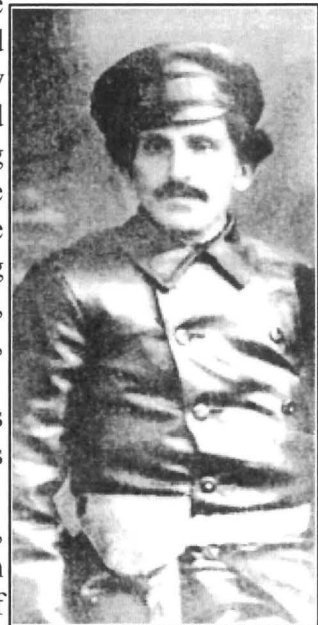
The Mennonite Brethren congregation started in 1903 was affiliated with the Einlage church of the Chortitza Colony, many of the settlers originally coming from that village. About 1906 the congregation constructed a larger church building, which also served as school. The building itself was shared by the entire German community, which included Baptists and Lutherans.

With the onset of World War I things changed. A number of Mennonite men from Millerovo served in the *Forsteidienst* and the *Sanitaetsdienst* as alternate service. The Mennonite business community established a hospital for wounded soldiers on the second floor of the administrative building of the Dyck mill, with Elisabeth DeFehr being in charge of the unit. Even so there was discrimination against the German-speaking citizens; the banks, for a time, would not extend credit to them. Plans were to confiscate all property owned by people of German origin.

During the Revolution and the following Civil War Mennonite businessmen, and likely other Russian businessmen as well, were targeted for special treatment. On one of the times when the city was occupied by the Communists about 100 of the leading citizens were imprisoned, and only saved from execution by the payment of substantial bribes. During the Civil War, Millerovo repeatedly passed back and forth between the struggling parties. In 1918 it was the centre of the Donetsk district of the Don Soviet Republic. Comrade A A Vermisher was one of the leading revolutionaries in the region; despite being a musician, poet and lawyer, his specialty was making home-made bombs. He was eventually killed, presumably in battle, in 1919.

For a time in 1918, Millerovo it was occupied by German troops as a condition of the Brest-Litovsk Treaty with Germany. Karl Ritter was a German soldier quartered in the home of Wilhelm Dyck.

In 1919 the Mennonite population of Millerovo was about 300, some of these, for example the extended Wilhelm Dyck and Abram DeFehr families, fleeing to the Kuban Colony by train in December of 1919. By 1926 there were still 231 Mennonites in Millerovo. During this time, particularly in 1924, many members of the Mennonite community immigrated to Canada. In 1927 the church was still active enough to



celebrate Thanksgiving, but likely shortly thereafter, with very few Mennonites left in Millerovo,

A A Vermisher in 1919  
District Soviet Deputy

the church probably closed its doors.

During the Soviet era Millerovo continued to grow as an industrial centre, with particular emphasis on agricultural products and food processing. It was incorporated as a city in 1926. With the German invasion of Russia during World War II, Millerovo was not spared. Operation “*Blau*” was a German offensive in south Russia aimed at Stalingrad which began in June 1942. The Soviet



Concentration camp “Dulag 125”

forces offered little resistance. There were several attempts to form defensive lines, one northeast of Kharkov, the other around Millerovo. Both of these pockets were eventually surrounded and destroyed, Millerovo being captured on 15 July 1942, as the German offensive headed on toward Stalingrad. The time of German occupation is recorded as being from 16 July 1941 until they retreated from the region 17 January 1943. The city is said to have suffered great loss during this time. During the occupation there was a concentration camp for Soviet war prisoners, “Dulag 125,” in Millerovo, also referred to as “Millerovo Pit.”

Millerovo largely recovered after the war. Industries during the Soviet times included production of metallurgical equipment, meat packing, vegetable oil extraction, flour milling, the making of wine and manufacture of clothing and furniture.

In 2004 a book, *My City Millerovo*, outlining the history of Millerovo, was published by Elena Kuzmenko. It included a fairly detailed description of archeology of the Don Basin, and outlined the subsequent developments, including the Mennonite era, the Revolution and Civil War, events of World War II and more recent industrial progress.

In 2005 the population was estimated at 38,726. Millerovo is the home of artist Igor Chuzhikov, who has exhibited his paintings in Ukraine, Moscow, Belgium and the USA. The South-Russian State University of Economics and Service is based in the city. The Millerovo Oil Extraction Plant, part of the Ashton Corporation, is one of the major enterprises of the oil and fat industry in Russia. The plant is able to process 150,000 tons of sunflower seeds annually. The most recent major news event in the region was the crash of a passenger aircraft near Millerovo on 24 August 2004; all 46 people on the Tupolev TU154B2 of the Sibir Airlines were killed.

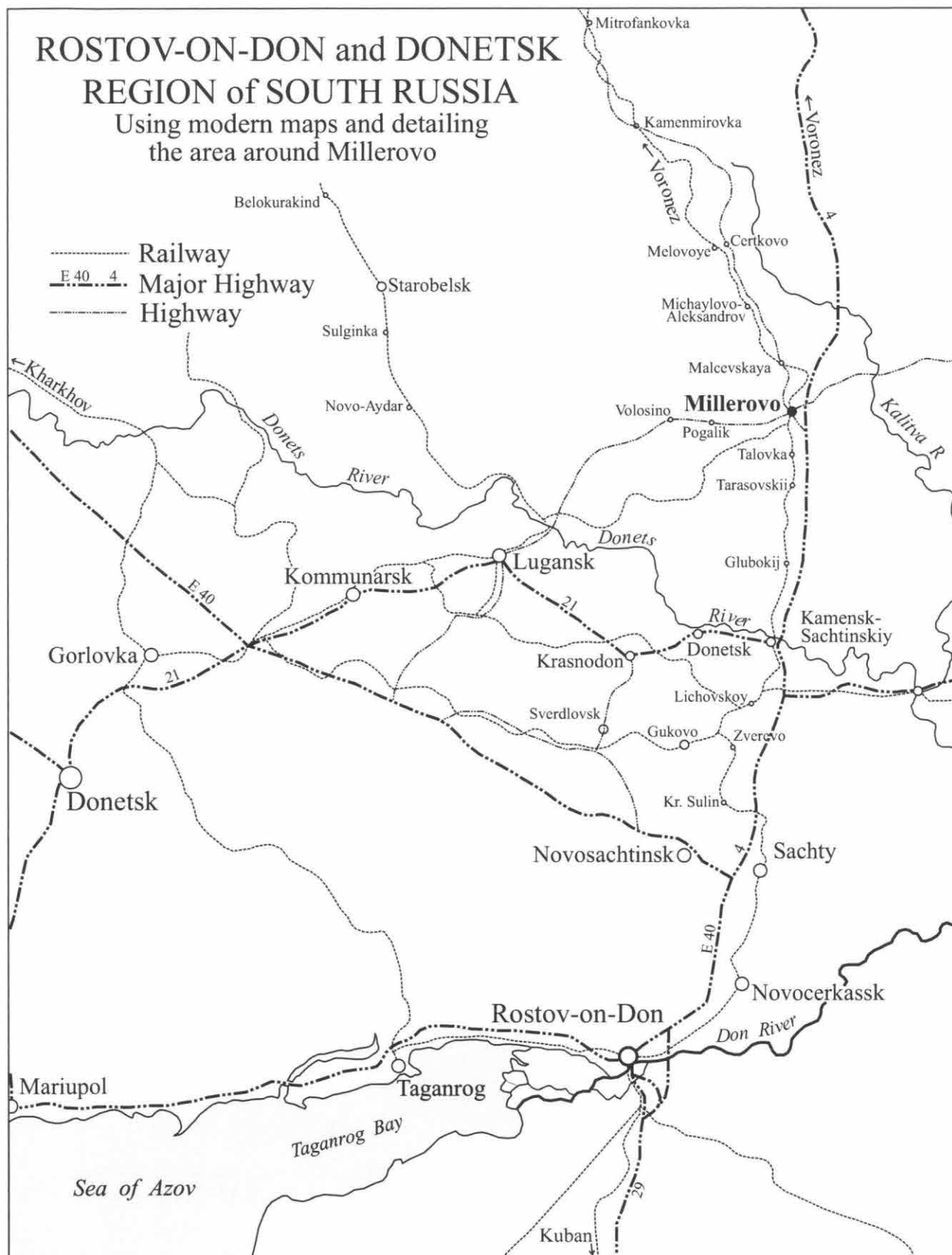


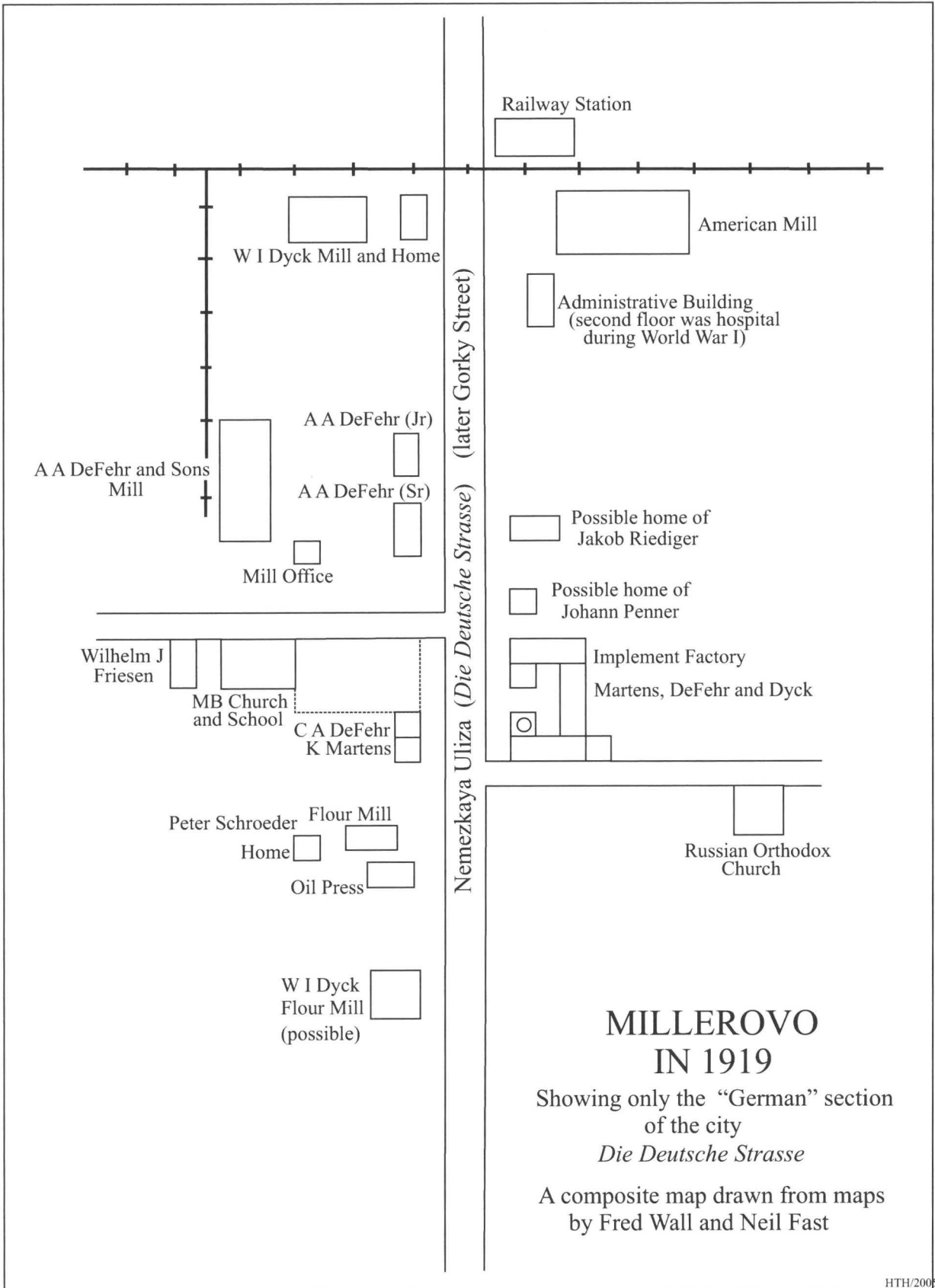
Elena Kuzmenko

Some of the Mennonite homes, such as those of A A DeFehr and Wilhelm Dyck, still exist, as does the church building. The “American” and the A A Defehr mill buildings still stand, although they are probably not functioning as mills.

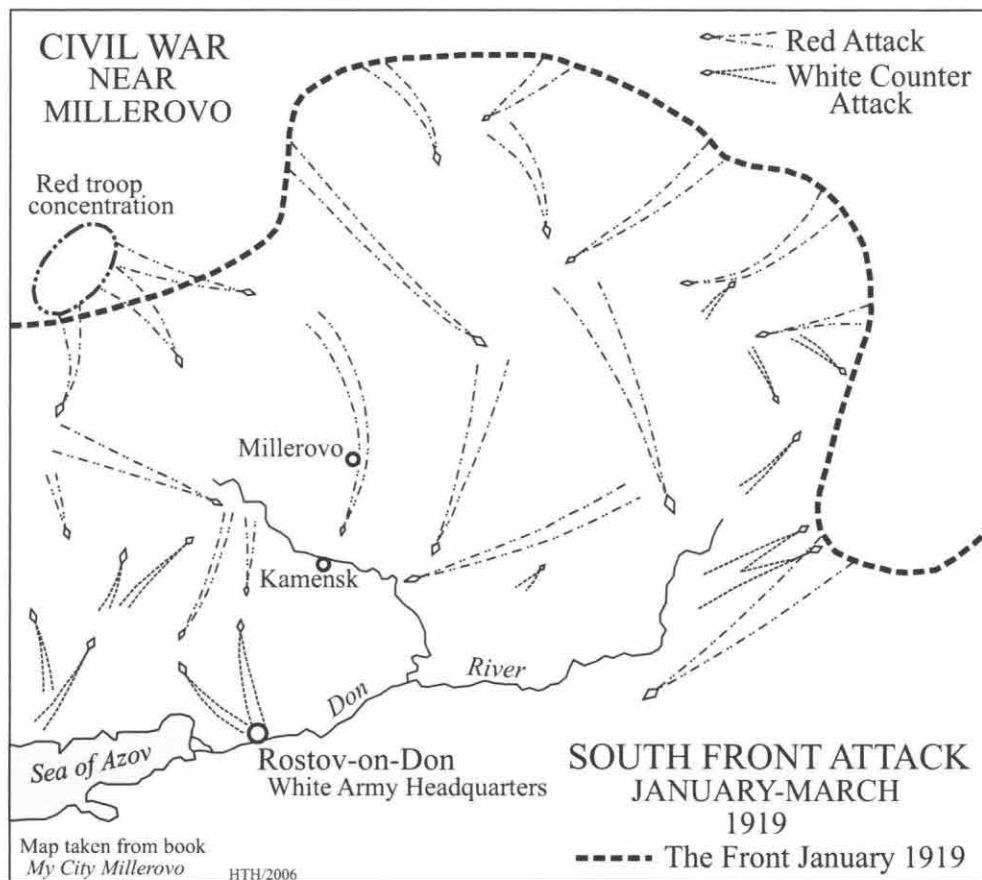
# ROSTOV-ON-DON and DONETSK REGION of SOUTH RUSSIA

Using modern maps and detailing  
the area around Millerovo



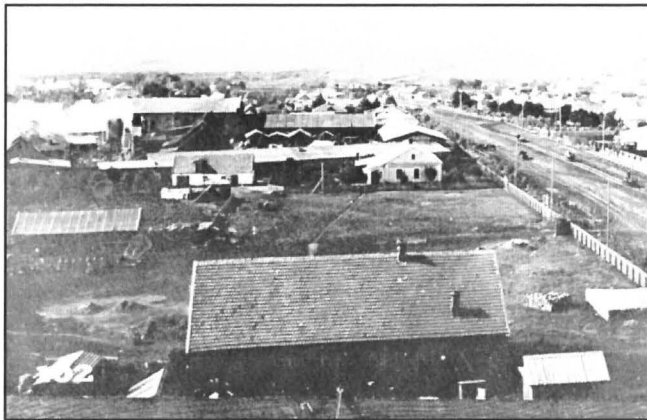


HTH/2005

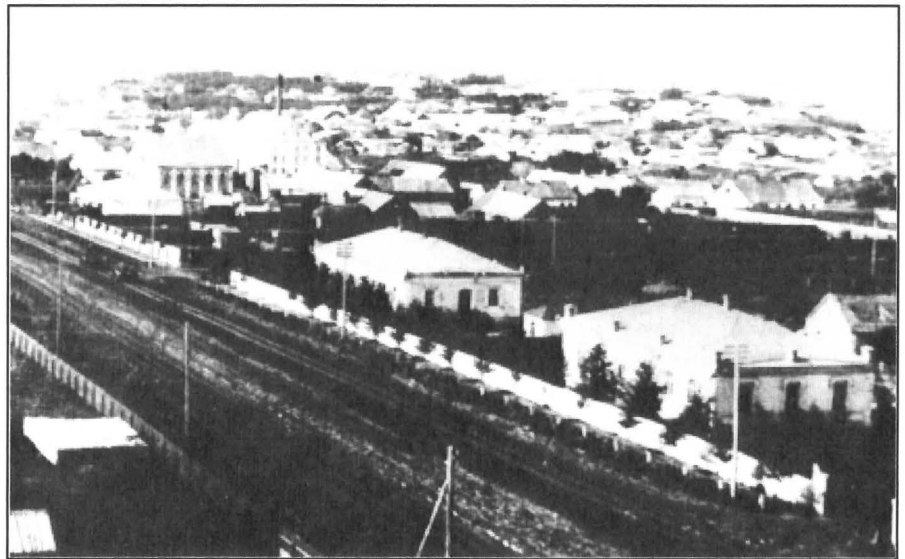




The Millerovo skyline about 1915



Millerovo overview with main street



Millerovo city and main street

Millerovo in 2005



Entrance to Millerovo



The K Martens and C A DeFehr homes in 2005  
with mills in the background



## LIST OF PEOPLE

(Who have at one time lived in Millerovo)  
(Each name will appear in **bold** print only once)

By 1919 there were said to be over 300 Mennonites in Millerovo. In 1926 it was apparently down to 231. We have identified 400 specific individuals who have lived in Millerovo at some period in their lives.

### **Berg, Gerhard**

Born about 1874

Wife **Katharina** - born about 1881

Children:

**Katharina** - born about 1904, **Maria** - born about 1906, **Margaretha** - born about 1910

**Isaak** - born about 1911

Immigrated to Canada in 1924, settling in Rosthern, Saskatchewan

### **Berg, Justina Heinrich**

Born about 1890

Children:

**Margaretha** - born about 1913

**Maria** - born about 1915

**Heinrich** - born about 1918

**Johann** - born about 1920

**Gerhard** - born about 1923

Immigrated to Canada in 1924, settling in Herbert, Saskatchewan

### **Born, Martin Isaak**

Probably **wife** and **3 children**

Applied for food drafts for 5 people through the pages of the *Mennonitische Rundschau*  
13 September 1922, p 11

Request directed to Johann Goossen, Berry, Oklahoma

### **Braun, Kornelius**

Wife, **Mrs Braun**

Kornelius was brother of Anna, wife of Peter Peter Schroeder

Together with Peter Peter Schroeder and Jakob Hildebrandt was owner of the Schroeder  
flour mill and oil press

### **Buller, Jakob Andreas**

Born about 1878

Wife **Katharina** - born about 1879

Children:

**Jakob** - born about 1908, **Peter** - born about 1910, **Abram** - born about 1911

**Franz** - born about 1913

Immigrated to Canada in 1924, settling in Rosthern, Saskatchewan

### **DeFehr, Abram Abram (Sr)**

Born 1848 in Einlage, Chortitza

Married **Helena Peters** in 1872

Moved to Kronsweide in 1883, where he was a farmer and carpenter

Moved to Petrovka, Naumenko Colony in 1888, then moved to Millerovo in 1906 or 1907

Built a 3 story steam-powered flour mill in Millerovo in 1907, called "A A DeFehr and Sons" together with son Abram Abram DeFehr (Jr), son-in-law Franz Janzen, and likely son-in-law Jakob Klassen and son Heinrich

By 1917 son Cornelius Abram DeFehr was also a partner in the mill

Fled to Kuban with the extended DeFehr and Dyck families 7 December 1919

Children:

Susanna - born 29 August 1874 in Einlage, died 13 October 1874, in Einlage

Helena - born 1875 (see separate listing Helena Abram Penner)

Susanna - born 15 September 1817 in Einlage, died 15 January 1905 in Petrovka after a 3½ month illness

Abram - born 1879 (see separate list Abram Abram DeFehr)

Cornelius - born 1881 (see separate list Cornelius Abram DeFehr and biography)

Katharina - born 1883 (see separate listing Jakob Klassen)

Franz - born 1885 (see separate listing Franz Abram DeFehr)

Maria - born 1887 (see separate listing Maria Abram Peters)

Jakob - born 26 March 1889 in Petrovka, died 10 April 1891 in Petrovka

**Margaretha** - born 22 February 1891 in Petrovka, lived with parents in Millerovo, likely fled to the Kuban in 1919

Married Jakob Reimer in 1920, 5 children

Stayed in Russia, died in Siberia

Jakob - born 10 June 1893 in Petrovka, died 2 August 1893 in Petrovka

Heinrich - born 1895 (see separate listing Heinrich Abram DeFehr)

Abram (Sr) died 9 November 1923 in the Kuban

Helena immigrated from the Kuban to Mexico with some of her children in 1924, then to Canada in 1926

Helena died 1 June 1931 in Didsbury, Alberta

**DeFehr, Abram Abram (Jr)**

Born 12 October 1879 in Einlage

Parents Abram Abram DeFehr and Helena Peters

Family moved to Kronsweide in 1883, then to Petrovka in 1888

Baptized and became member of the Mennonite Brethren Church in 1901

Married **Helena Paetkau** 26 April 1906, soon thereafter establishing a home in Millerovo

Children:

**Abram** - born 28 February 1907 in Millerovo, died 15 October 1908 in Millerovo

**Johann** - born 28 February 1908 in Millerovo, immigrated to Canada, married Helena Wiebe, 4 children

**Helena** - born 3 May 1909 in Millerovo, immigrated to Canada, married Heinrich Ewert, 1 child

**Abram** - born 15 July 1910 in Millerovo, immigrated to Canada, married Maria Reimer, 4 children, large furniture manufacturing business in Winnipeg,

“Palliser Furniture Limited,” Died 14 May 1998 in Winnipeg  
Kornelius - born 13 September 1911 in Millerovo, died 7 October 1914 in Millerovo  
Heinrich - born 17 November 1912 in Millerovo, died 5 October 1914 in Millerovo  
Anna - born 26 November 1914 in Millerovo, immigrated to Canada, married  
Hermann Dick, 3 children  
Elisabeth - born 26 November 1914 in Millerovo, died 9 March 1915 in Millerovo  
Heinrich - born 27 November 1918 in Millerovo, immigrated to Canada, married  
Irene Thiessen

Together with father Abram Abram DeFehr and brother-in-law Franz Janzen built a large  
steam-powered flour mill in Millerovo called “A A DeFehr and Sons”

Choir conductor in the church

With the family fled to the Kuban in December 1919; again was choir conductor in the Kuban  
Immigrated to Mexico in 1924, then to Canada in 1926

Lived in Winnipeg 17 years; helped found North Kildonan

Was the building superintendent for the construction of the MB church

Worked on committees and conducted the choir

1942 moved to St Catherines for 13 years, to North Kildonan 4 years, then Clearbrook, BC

Wife Helena died 1960; he married Widow Katharina Janzen 14 April 1962

Abram died 26 October 1966 in Clearbrook

#### **DeFehr, Cornelius Abram**

(see biography of Cornelius Abram (C A) DeFehr)

Born 6 October 1881 in Einlage, Chortitza Colony

Parents Abram Abram DeFehr (Sr) and Helena Peters

Married **Elisabeth Dyck** 13 November 1903 in Millerovo

She was the daughter of Wilhelm Isaak Dyck and Emilie Poetker

Moved to Millerovo in 1904 soon after the birth of first child

Children:

**Elisabeth** - born 11 October 1904 in Petrovka, Naumenko Colony, moved to Millerovo  
with the family, fled to the Kuban with the family in 1919, married Bernhard  
Bernhard Fast 23 June 1923 in Wohldemfuerst, Kuban, immigrated to Canada  
in 1924, 5 children, died 12 September 1976 in Winnipeg

**Helena** - born 27 March 1906 in Millerovo, died July 1907 in Millerovo

**Wilhelm** - born 13 November 1907 in Millerovo, died 19 October 1910 in Millerovo

**Abram** - born 12 May 1909 in Millerovo, fled to the Kuban with the family in 1919,  
immigrated to Canada with family in 1925, married Velma Litz 6 September 1931  
in Winnipeg, 4 children, Velma died 7 July 1993 in Winnipeg, Abram remarried  
and now (2005) lives in Kelowna, BC

**Cornelius** - born 2 June 1911 in Millerovo, fled to the Kuban with family in 1919,  
immigrated to Canada with family in 1925, married Agatha Neufeld 24 May 1936,  
3 children, died 19 February 2000 in Winnipeg

**Wilhelm** - born 25 May 1913 in Millerovo, fled to the Kuban with family in 1919,  
immigrated to Canada with family in 1925, married Erna Neufeld 6 April 1940,  
4 children, died 20 June 1987 at Victoria Beach, Manitoba

Cornelius, with Kornelius Martens, established an agricultural machinery factory in 1904;  
he was the business manager, Martens the engineer and production manager;  
father-in-law Wilhelm Isaak Dyck joined as partner in 1909  
By 1917 he was also part owner, together with father A A DeFehr and other siblings, of a  
large flour mill "A A DeFehr and Sons"  
Fled to the Kuban in December 1919 together with the extended DeFehr/Dyck families  
Immigrated to Canada in September 1925  
Successful import-export and furniture business in Winnipeg  
Participated in and played a key role in many church and conference activities  
Assisted Mennonite Central Committee in the settlement of refugees in South America after  
World War II  
Elisabeth died 23 March 1972 in Winnipeg  
Cornelius died 11 February 1979 in Winnipeg

**DeFehr, Franz Abram**

Born 15 April 1885 in Kronsweide, Chortitza  
Seventh of 12 children of Abram Abram DeFehr and Helena Peters  
Did not flee from Millerovo to the Kuban with the extended DeFehr/Dyck family in 1919  
Worked as a clerk in a bank in Millerovo  
Imprisoned for 3 months in 1921 during the Communist time because of a jealous co-worker's  
complaint  
Finally rescued from the GPU jail through the intervention of his brother Cornelius  
Stayed in Russia  
Married **Susanna Dyck**, had at least 1 child, **Susanna**  
Died in exile in 1942

**DeFehr, Heinrich Abram**

Born 15 May 1895 in Petrovka  
Youngest of 12 children of Abram Abram DeFehr and Helena Peters  
Went to *Kommerzschule* in Rostov, at least 1909-1913  
Worked in, and in time became part owner of the large flour mill owned by his father  
"A A DeFehr and Sons"  
*Sanitaeter* during World War I, serving on Hospital Train No 195  
Fled to the Kuban with the extended DeFehr/Dyck family in December 1919  
Immigrated to Mexico over Germany with his mother and some siblings in 1924, then in 1926  
to Canada  
Married Anna Bergen in 1927, had 7 children; Anna died in 1947  
In 1948 he married Widow Sara Kehler (nee Froese), who had 4 children  
Heinrich died 8 September 1971 in Winnipeg, Manitoba

**Dueck, Heinrich Heinrich**

*Sanitaeter* working on Hospital Train No 163 during World War I

**Dyck, Aganetha P**

Daughter **Margaretha**

Daughter **Agnes**

Immigrated to Canada, landing in Quebec on 8 October 1927, Settling in Winnipeg

### **Dyck, David Isaak**

Born 23 October 1851 in Rosenthal, Chortitza Colony

Parents Isaak Heinrich Dyck and Maria David Redekopp

He was an older brother of Elder Wilhelm Isaak Dyck

Moved to Millerovo in 1910, probably at the invitation of brother Wilhelm

Employed by Wilhelm

Married **Helena Warkentin** 6 February 1876

Helena was born 30 September 1854

Had 8 children, the youngest 3 would have lived with them in Millerovo

First lived in Rosenthal, moved to Adelsheim in 1881, to Eichenfeld in 1884, to Schoenberg in 1901, then to Millerovo in 1910

In 1916-17 owned 2 shares of the *Russisch-Amerikanische Muellerei Gesellschaft*

Children living in Millerovo;

**Wilhelm** - born 16 June 1891, married in 1914, died 13 August 1948

**Agatha** - born 29 November 1893, married 1914, died 21 June 1947

**Gerhard** - born 21 August 1896, died 1944

David died 7 June 1927, Helena died 17 June 1928

### **Dyck, Nikolai**

Born 6 November 1880

First marriage to **Margaretha Bickert**

Children:

Possibly a son **Nikolai**, who died

**Katharina** - born 26 February 1904, lived in Millerovo with the family, married

Franz Heese 19 April 1924, died 5 August 1976

Wife Margaretha died a few years after marriage

Nikolai married **Aganeta Janzen** 23 November 1908

Aganeta was born 23 October 1890 in Chortitza, Chortitza

Ninth of 15 children of Peter Peter Janzen and Elisabeth Schulz

Children:

**Nikolai** - born 1909 in Millerovo, died 1910 at the age of 8 months in Millerovo

**Maria** - born 16 January 1911 in Millerovo, to Danzig in 1918, then to Gronau in

Westphalia, then to The Netherlands, immigrated to Canada in 1927, married

Nikolai Abram Thiessen 1 June 1925, 5 children, husband Nikolai died

16 December 1999

**Margaretha** - born 1912 in Millerovo, died 1926 in Gronau, Westphalia, of meningitis

**Agnes** - born 7 August 1914 in Millerovo, died 19 June 2000

Nikolai worked as a grain purchaser for "A A DeFehr and Sons" flour mill in Millerovo

Was in the *Sanitaetsdienst* during World War I

The family fled from Russia with the retreating German troops when they evacuated in 1918

Nikolai died 23 November 1918 as the family was travelling to Danzig

Family stayed in Danzig for 3 years, then to Gronau, Westphalia, then to The Netherlands

Aganeta and children immigrated to Canada in 1927, landing in Halifax, then to Winnipeg

on 10 October 1927

Aganeta married Philip Wiebe in 1933, died 24 October 1978

**Dyck, Peter Peter**

Born 2 October 1880

Parents Peter Dyck and Katharina Kehler

Married **Elisabeth Voth** 5 January 1913

She was born 22 October 1892 in Friedensfeld, Sagradovka

Her parents were Peter Voth and Elisabeth Wallmann

Son **Arthur** - born 7 December 1913 in Millerovo

**Dyck, Wilhelm Isaak**

(see biography Elder Wilhelm Isaak Dyck)

Born 4 February 1854 in Rosenthal, Chortitza

Sixth and last child of Isaak Heinrich Dyck and Maria David Redekopp

Orphan at the age of 3, *Dorfschule* likely in Franzfeld, *Zentralschule* in Chortitza

Colony administrator

Married Maria Riediger 7 July 1877, lived in Nikolaifeld, then Reinfeld by 1889

11 children

In Reinfeld ordained as a minister of the MB Church; extensive itinerant travel

Maria died 14 October 1896 of typhus; Wilhelm married Emilie Poetker 19 July 1897,

7 more children

Moved to Petrovka, Naumenko Colony in 1900, then to Millerovo in 1903

One of the first five Mennonite families to move to Millerovo, came with his own single children as well as some of his married children

Children who moved to Millerovo with the family:

Maria (see Kornelius Jakob Martens)

Elisabeth (see Cornelius Abram DeFehr)

Katharina (see David Johann Klassen)

**Anna** - born 24 March 1889 in Reinfeld, disabled, died 13 August 1922 in the Kuban

Helena (see Jakob Peter Riediger)

**Susanna** - born 7 February 1893 in Reinfeld, married cousin Wilhelm Dyck in 1915,

7 children, stayed in Russia, died 13 August 1984

**Amalie** - born 18 February 1901 in Petrovka, baptized in Millerovo, attended

*Maedchenschule* in Halbstadt, to the Kuban in 1919, immigrated to Canada in

1924, married Johannes Bock 23 October 1927 in Gnadenthal, Manitoba, moved

Manitou, Gnadenthal, Marquette, had 10 children of whom 3 died in infancy,

she died 11 December 1988

**Wilhelm** - born 18 July 1903 in Millerovo, baptized in Millerovo 5 October 1917, to the

Kuban in 1919, immigrated to Canada in 1924, married Anna Reimer

25 June 1927, lived in Gnadenthal, then Coaldale 1932-34, thereafter Niverville,

6 children, pastor of the Niverville MB Church, for many years as lay minister,

then as ordained minister, successful businessman, died 6 December 1971

in Niverville

**Agathe** - born 14 September 1905 in Millerovo, died 21 September 1926 in Millerovo

**Agathe** - born 8 June 1907 in Millerovo, to the Kuban in 1919, immigrated to Canada in

1924, worked, then went to Manitoba Teachers College, taught school near Niverville 1930-36, married Cornelius Cornelius Warkentin in 1936, lived in Winnipeg, 6 children, adopted her younger sister Elfrida in 1943, died 13 October 2000 in Winnipeg

**Gerhard** - born 26 November 1912 in Millerovo, died 2 October 1917 in Millerovo of a millstone accident

Elfrieda - born 2 January 1927 in Gnadenthal, Manitoba

With partners Wilhelm J Friesen, Johann Nickel and J Siemens built a steam-powered flour mill in Millerovo in 1903; Nickel and Siemens soon dropped out of the partnership  
Then, with Friesen as partner built a new six-story mill in 1908, the company being called the *Russisch-Amerikanische Muellerei Gesellschaft*

In 1916-17 Wilhelm owned 14½, Wilhelm Friesen owned 11 of the 48 shares of the company  
Became partner, together with sons-in-law Cornelius A DeFehr and Cornelius Martens of an agricultural machinery factory; it was established in 1904, he became partner in 1909

Leader of the Millerovo MB Church from its beginning, ordained as elder 11 October 1914  
Itinerant minister, travelled to many parts of Russia

Fled from Millerovo to the Kuban with extended family 7 December 1919

Immigrated to Canada 1924, bought farm in Gnadenthal, Manitoba

1930 moved to live with daughter Agathe near Niverville, Manitoba

Emilie died of breast cancer 11 December 1931; Wilhelm died 2 March 1936 in Niverville

#### **Ediger, David David**

Born 20 April 1881 in Huschin, Crimea

Parents David Johann Ediger and Maria Penner

Married **Anna Wiens** on 4 January 1907

She was born 8 August 1882 in Johannesruh, Crimea

Her parents were Jakob Wiens and Anna Beier

Children:

**Luise** - born 6 June 1911 in Millerovo, married David Franz Thiessen 30 July 1931  
in Einlage, had at least 1 son, she died 20 January 1999 in Winnipeg, Manitoba

**Helene** - born 24 March 1915 in Millerovo, married Cornelius Kliewer 15 May 1936  
in Einlage, died 22 June in Winnipeg, Manitoba

Quite probably one of the owners of an agricultural implement manufacture and repair shop  
"Ediger Brothers and Unrau"

#### **Ediger, Mr**

Likely brother to David Ediger; was one of the owners of "Ediger Brothers and Unrau"

#### **Fast, Alexander Johann**

Born 22 September 1890 in Alexanderfeld, Kuban

Parents Johann Fast and Helene Dueck

Teacher in a private school in Millerovo, likely the one at the MB Church

Married **Katharina Penner**, daughter of the principal of the school 8 May 1921

Immigrated to Canada 26 June 1925

Received teaching certificate and taught in Manitoba 1930-1947

1947 moved to Atchelitz, British Columbia; Alexander died 2 July 1964



Katharina then moved to Chilliwack, where she died 10 January 1999

**Fast, Isaak**

Born about 1893

Wife **Elisabeth** - born about 1896

Children:

**Isaak** - born about 1918

**Waldo** - born about 1920

**Alexander** - born about 1922

Immigrated to Canada in 1924, settling in Herbert, Saskatchewan

Isaak was actually delayed in Southampton for some time because of trachoma

He received his teaching certificate in Winnipeg and taught in Manitoba

Isaak died in a snowstorm March 1941

**Friesen, Heinrich**

Named farmer (*Landwirt*) from Millerovo

Refugee in Germany as of February 1921, at Stallgasse 38, Marienburg, West Prussia

**Friesen, Isbrand Johann**

Born about 1854

Wife **Maria** - born about 1861

Children:

**Sarah** - born about 1898

**Wilhelm** - born about 1905

Immigrated to Canada in 1924, settling in Rosthern, Saskatchewan

**Friesen, Johann Isbrand**

Born about 1892

Wife **Claudia** - born about 1899

Sister **Olga** - born about 1904

Immigrated to Canada in 1924, settling in Rosthern, Saskatchewan

**Friesen, Wilhelm J**

Wife **Mrs Friesen**

Was a teacher

Partner with Wilhelm Isaak Dyck in the ownership of a small *Schlichtmuelle* (planer mill) in Petrovka, Naumenko Colony

In 1903, together with Wilhelm Isaak Dyck, Johann Nickel and J Siemens, built a large steam-powered flour mill in Millerovo; soon Nickel and Siemens dropped out

Dyck and Friesen constructed a new, much larger mill in 1908, the company was called the *Russisch-Amerikanische Muellerei Gesellschaft*, or "American Mill"

1916-17 Friesen was still a major partner in the mill, holding 11 of the 48 shares

During the unsettled times Wilhelm and his wife were planning to go to Germany

**Froese, Tina**

Lived in Millerovo in 1906

Probably had a **daughter** at the time, age 6 or 7

**Gadsky, Heinrich Adolf**

Born about 1905

Immigrated to Canada in 1924, settling in Herbert, Saskatchewan

**Goertz, Mr**

Received part of a food package from American Mennonite Relief in July 1922

**Goertzen, Helena (nee Schapansky)**

Born 24 July 1837 in Chortitza Colony

Father Hermann Schapansky

Married Johann Jakob Penner, then after he died, a Goertzen

She died 23 December 1907 in Millerovo

**Guenther, Mrs H**

(3 people, therefore probably **2 children**)

Received part of a food package from American Mennonite Relief in July 1922

**Harder, Peter**

Born 20 October 1864

Father Peter Harder

Married Anna Braun in 1892 in Ebenfeld, Borozenko Colony

She died July 1910 in the Arkadak Colony

Peter died 29 March 1920 in Millerovo

**Harder, Widow P**

Received part of a food package from American Mennonite Relief in July 1922

**Heckmann, Johann**

(3 people, therefore probably **wife and 1 child**)

Received part of a food package from American Mennonite Relief in July 1922

**Hepting, Heinrich Andreas**

Born 1881

Married **Anna Lecher**, who was born 1881

Children:

**Olga** - born 3 October 1907 in Millerovo, married Aron Dietrich Rempel

13 November 1932 in Yarrow, BC, 9 children,

died 31 October 1991 in Richmond, BC

**Elisabeth** - born 25 March 1910 in Millerovo, married Kornelius Kornelius Klassen

19 December 1936, 3 children, died 6 December 1963 in Kelowna, BC

**Hildebrandt, Jakob**

Wife **Mrs Hildebrandt**

Together with brother-in-law Peter Peter Schroeder and Kornelius Braun was owner of a flour mill and an oil mill

**Isaak, Franz Franz**

Born 26 September 1876 in Lichtenau, Molotschna

Parents Franz Peter Isaak and Maria Dyck

Converted at the age of 14, was baptized 3 years later and joined the MB Church

Married **Aganetha Doerksen** 27 May 1899

Her father was Elder Jakob Doerksen

They had 5 children, 1 daughter died in infancy, the other 4 were:

**Nalja, Franz, Jakob, Abram**

Franz taught in Nikolaifeld for 5 years, then in Bassabotovka, Kharkov for 2 years  
 Then moved to Millerovo and taught there for 2 years (1906-1908)  
 Then moved to Glubokaya (now Glubokij) near Millerovo, where he established his own mill  
 In 1910 was ordained as minister by the Millerovo MB Church  
 Together with Wilhelm Isaak Dyck represented the Millerovo MB Church at the MB  
 Convention held at Vassilievka, Kharkov Region, 14-16 September 1918  
 Shortly after 1918 moved to the Kuban  
 In October of 1923 Franz was chosen to be on the executive of the All-Russian Mennonite  
 Agricultural Union (*Allrussischer Mennonitischer Landwirtschaftlicher Verein*).  
 Other members of the executive were P F Froese and C F Klassen  
 The organizing meeting was in Alexanderthal, Molotschna  
 Subsequent meetings were in Devlakanovo in 1924 and Moscow in 1925. The  
 last meeting was in 1927, when Franz was already in Canada  
 Immigrated to Canada in 1925, settling in Winnipeg  
 Continued to work for the good of the Kingdom of God  
 When son Jakob suggested that he relinquish some of his work because of poor health  
 Franz wrote back, "I serve a Lord who will never give his servant too much work;  
 I may not live much longer, but as long as the Lord allows me to live, I will labour  
 for him."  
 Soon thereafter Franz died of a heart attack, 14 May 1944, in Winnipeg, Manitoba

#### **Isaak, Jakob**

Born 30 December 1875  
 Married **Anna Kornelius Pauls**, likely before 1900  
 Anna was born 23 September 1879 in Kronsthal, Chortitza  
 Her parents were Kornelius Pauls and Agatha Zacharias  
 First lived in the Orenburg Colony, then moved to Millerovo some time after 1907  
 Jakob was owner of a paint and chemical factory in Millerovo  
 Advertized in *Christlicher Familienkalender* in 1914  
 Address of the factory was on German Street, telephone No 11  
 Children:  
**Jakob** - born about 1900 in the Orenburg Colony, shot by the Bolsheviks in 1919 because  
 he tried to escape without paying the huge bribe they demanded  
**Abram** - born 28 September 1902 in the Orenburg Colony, moved to Millerovo, then to  
 the Kuban with the family, came for the funeral of his 4 siblings in Millerovo in  
 June of 1926, married Maria Klippenstein 15 August 1926,  
 immigrated to Canada, died 5 February 1977 in Clearbrook, British Columbia  
**Anna** - born 15 March 1907 in the Orenburg Colony, moved to Millerovo, then to the  
 Kuban, eventually to Curitiba, Brazil by 1939, died 18 December 1985  
 in Curitiba  
**Agnes** - born about 1908, likely in Millerovo, to Kuban with family likely in 1919,  
 drowned 18 June 1926 while visiting back in Millerovo  
**Katharina (Tina)** - born about 1910 in Millerovo, to Kuban with family likely in 1919,  
 drowned 18 June 1926 while visiting back in Millerovo

**Agathe** - born about 1914 in Millerovo, to Kuban with family likely in 1919,  
drowned 18 June 1926 while visiting back in Millerovo

There is not unanimity as to the ages of Agnes and Agathe

Another source has Agathe born in 1907, Agnes in 1913

**Peter** - born about 1916 in Millerovo, to Kuban with the family likely in 1919,  
drowned 18 June 1926 while visiting back in Millerovo

**Wilhelm (Willy)** - born 22 November 1919 in Millerovo, to Kuban with the family  
likely in 1919, present at the drowning tragedy of his siblings in Millerovo  
18 June 1926, but because he could not swim did not go into the water,  
immigrated to Curitiba, Brazil, where he married Helena Willms on  
24 February 1940, 9 children, died 10 January 1992 in Curitiba, Brazil

Father Jakob was tortured by the Bolsheviks, son Jakob had been killed, so the family  
chose to leave for what appeared to be a safer region, the Kuban, likely in 1919,  
abandoning business and house

Jakob developed a stroke and died 10 September 1925 in the Kuban

Wife Anna with 5 children went back to Millerovo in June of 1926 to visit relatives, and  
possibly to reclaim their house

Four children died in a swimming accident on June 18: Agnes, Katharina, Agathe and Peter

The funeral was held on June 20 at the MB church

Anna died 28 December 1928

#### **Janzen, Abram**

Received part of a food package from American Mennonite Relief in July 1922

#### **Janzen, Aron**

Secretary of the Mennonite Brethren Church in July 1922

#### **Janzen, Franz**

Widower with **4 daughters**

Married Helena DeFehr, daughter of A A DeFehr (Sr), in Osterwick 11 November 1900,  
then likely lived in Osterwick

Moved to Petrovka in 1904, then to Millerovo in 1905

Together with father-in-law A A DeFehr (Sr) and brother-in-law A A DeFehr (Jr) helped  
build a large flour mill, "A A DeFehr and Sons"

Picture taken in 1910 labels him as one of the owners of the mill

Franz died 25 August 1911 in Millerovo

Helena married Widower Johann Penner 2 January 1914 in Millerovo

(see listing Helena Abram Penner)

#### **Janzen, Franz**

Refugee in Germany as of February 1921, at Stallgasse 39, Marienburg, West Prussia

#### **Janzen, Franz Franz**

Born 16 June 1884 in Kalinovo, Memrik Colony

Married **Maria Neufeld**

Born 11 December 1888 in Kalinovo, Memrik Colony

Children:

7 boys, most of whom died at childbirth

**Franz** - born 13 November 1909 in Kolytarevka, Dontesk, Russia,  
died 8 February 1975 in Abbotsford, British Columbia

**Abram** - born 27 September 1912, died 8 June 1935 in Dauphin, Manitoba

**Olga** - born 21 May 1916 in Kalinovo, Memrik Colony, married twice,  
lived in Saskatchewan and British Columbia

**Martha (Wiens)** - born 26 February 1928, adopted daughter

Not sure how long the family lived in Millerovo, but likely moved there after 1916

Father Franz died 10 December 1920 in Millerovo

#### **Janzen, Johann A**

Born about 1847

Immigrated to Canada on 29 May 1925, with daughter **Maria Redekopp**, settling in  
Edmonton, Alberta

#### **Klassen, Abraham Gerhard**

Born 12 March 1883 in Rosenthal, Chortitza

Parents Gerhard Klassen and Helena Dyck

Married **Helena Epp** 20 April 1910

She was born 23 March 1883 in Gruenfeld

Her parents were Cornelius C Epp and Helena Hiebert

Had 5 children:

**Helena** - born 10 July 1912 in Millerovo

Abraham was a farmer

Exiled to Siberia in 1937, died 1938

Wife Helena lived in Miloradovka, Ekaterinoslav Province in May of 1942

She died 1975 in Russia

#### **Klassen, Bernhard Peter**

Born 20 July 1887 in Sergeyevka, Fuerstenland Colony

Parents Peter Klassen and Agatha B Krahn

Married **Anna Janzen**

She was born 19 January 1898 in New York, Ignatyev Colony

Children:

**Arthur** - born 22 October 1922 in Millerovo

First escaped to Germany by 1927, then to Canada by 1950

**Anna** - born 26 July 1924 in Millerovo

First escaped to Germany, then to Canada by 1952

**Agatha** - born 26 June 1926 in Millerovo

To Canada by 1952

Bernhard - born 22 March 1928 in Zaporozhye, South Russia

Peter - born 9 February 1936 in Zaporozhye, South Russia

The Klassen family lived in Millerovo at least from 1922 to 1926

Moved to Zaporozhye by 1928, and lived there until at least 1936

At least 2 of the children escaped to Germany in the 1920s

At least 3 of the children were in Canada by the early 1950s

Bernhard died 16 March 1942 in South Russia

**Klassen, David Johann**

One of the first Mennonites to settle in Millerovo in the spring of 1903

Was seeking better business opportunity for a flour mill

One of five initial partners to establish a steam-powered mill in Millerovo. The others were

Wilhelm Isaak Dyck, Wilhelm J Friesen, Johann Nickel, and J Siemens. All but

Dyck and Friesen soon dropped out of the partnership

Assisted Wilhelm Isaak Dyck in the leadership of the MB Church

**Klassen, David Johann**

Born 10 August 1881 in Varvarovka, Ekaterinoslav

*Zentralschule* and Teachers College in Chortitza; private tutor in Kherson probably 2 years

Summer of 1903 baptized in Nikolayevka

Offered teaching position in Millerovo in 1904, boarded in home of Wilhelm Isaak Dyck

Married **Katharina Dyck**, daughter of Wilhelm Dyck on 26 June 1905

She was born 24 December 1886 in Nikolaifeld

David probably continued teaching

Moved to Kantemirovka in 1909 to start his own flour mill, possibly continued teaching

During World War I, starting in 1914, served in the *Anadoler Forstei*

Back to Kantemirovka a few years, then back to Millerovo

Fled to the Kuban with the extended DeFehr/Dyck family in December 1919

Taught in the Kuban for 3½ years

Immigrated to Canada in 1924, to Hepburn, Coaldale in 1927, Yarrow BC in 1941

Ordained as minister in Coaldale in 1937

Children:

**Wilhelm** - likely born in Millerovo, died in infancy

**Johann** - likely born in Millerovo, died in infancy

**Maria** - likely born in Millerovo, died at age 5 during World War I

**Katharina** - born 4 October 1909 in Kantemirovka

**Elisabeth** - born 21 January 1914 in Kantemirovka

**David** - born 5 September 1916, probably in Kantemirovka, possibly in Millerovo

Agatha - born 25 October 1921 in the Kuban

Anna - born in Hepburn, Saskatchewan

Helena - born in Coaldale, Alberta, died in infancy

Jacob - born in Coaldale, Alberta, died in infancy

Father David died 1977 in Yarrow, BC, Katharina in 1984; they had been married 72 years

**Klassen, Heinrich**

Probably part owner of "A A Defehr and Sons" in 1917

**Klassen, Jakob**

Married **Katharina Abram DeFehr** 22 January 1912

Katharina was born 13 September 1883 in Kronsweide

Parents Abram Abram DeFehr (Sr) and Helena Peters

The family moved to Petrovka in 1888; here she went to school and spent her youth

Was converted at the age of 18 and joined the Mennonite Brethren Church

Taught Sunday School and sang in the choir

Moved to Millerovo with her parents 1906 or 1907

Children:

**Franz** - born 1913, killed in an accident 1936

**Johann**

**Erna**

Susanna (Suse)

Katharina (Kay)

Helena - born in Mexico

The exact dates of births of the children are not known

Jakob probably worked in and was part owner of the mill of his father-in-law,

“A A DeFehr and Sons”

Father-in-law saved his life by paying 10,000 rubles to the Communists during the Russian Civil War

Fled to the Kuban with the extended DeFehr/Dyck family in December 1919

After a difficult journey immigrated to Mexico in 1924, then to Canada in 1926

Lived in Winnipeg 15 years, then moved to St Catherines, Ontario

Jakob died 24 October 1948, Katharina died 12 March 1975

#### **Klassen, Peter Abraham**

Born 1890 in Kleefeld, Molotschna

Parents Abraham Abraham Klassen and Cornelia Toews

Came to Millerovo to work as a bookkeeper in 1914

Died 1922 of typhus

#### **Krause, Anna (Nut)**

Born about 1885

On Millerovo picnic picture of about 1915

#### **Kroeker, Dietrich Peter** (see also Melitopol page 237)

Born about 1880

Probably was a *Sanitaeter* working on Hospital Train No 163 during World War I

Wife **Katharina** - born about 1891

Children:

**Dietrich** - born about 1913

**Alexander** - born about 1920

**Katharina** - born about 1922

**Justina** - born about 1897, a relative

Immigrated to Canada in 1924, settling in Rosthern, Saskatchewan

#### **Kroeker, Johann Johann**

Immigrated to North America some time before 1922

Cousin Peter Peter Kroeker of Melitopol requested a food draft from him through the pages of the *Mennonitische Rundschau* in 1922

#### **Krueger, Mr**

Wife **Mrs Krueger**

Son **Bernhard** born 16 January 1921 in Millerovo

He was registered as living at Sobornaya 1, Berdyansk in 1942



**Loewen, Elisabeth**

Born about 1881

Children:

**Johann** - born about 1904

**Luise** - born about 1908

**Emilia** - born about 1910

**Nikolai** - born about 1911

**Jakob** - born about 1912

**Margaretha** - born about 1915

Immigrated to Canada in 1924, settling in Rosthern, Saskatchewan

**Loewen, Wilhelm**

Born 18 May 1869, second of 7 children

Parents Wilhelm Loewen and Anna Dueck

Married, probably 6 children

Wilhelm died in Millerovo in 1920, leaving his widow with children

**Widow Wilhelm Loewen**

(7 people, therefore she likely had **6 children**)

Received part of a food package from American Mennonite Relief in July 1922

**Martens, Johann Johann**

Born 1893

Father Minister Johann Martens of Sergeyeвка

Together with his brother Wilhelm Johann Martens was offered financial help by Wilhelm

Isaak Dyck to attend *Zentralschule*, probably about 1910-1914

Brother Wilhelm then worked in the mill of Wilhelm Dyck as a bookkeeper for several years, likely starting in 1914, to repay the loan

**Martens, Kornelius Jakob**

(see biography of Kornelius Jakob Martens)

Born 23 April 1876 in the Baratov Colony

Parents Jakob Martens and Susanna Klassen

Married **Maria Dyck** on 6 June 1902

Her parents were Wilhelm Isaak Dyck and Emilie Poetker

Moved to Millerovo, likely at the same time as his father-in-law Wilhelm Isaak Dyck

Together with brother-in-law Cornelius Abram DeFehr established an agricultural machinery factory in 1904.

Cornelius DeFehr was the business manager, Martens the engineer and production manager

Wilhelm Isaak Dyck became one of the owners in 1909

Children:

**Maria** - born 23 August 1903, likely in Millerovo, married **Jakob Schulz**, an engineer at the Martens/DeFehr factory, 5 children, immigrated to Canada after World War II, died 5 July 1995

**Susanna (Suse)** - born 30 August 1905 in Millerovo, married Johann Johann Unruh on 29 May 1926 in the Kuban, 5 children, immigrated to Canada in 1928, died 13 June 1997 in Winnipeg

**Elisabeth** - born 19 October 1907 in Millerovo, died 11 November 1907 in Millerovo

**Katharina** - born 1 January 1909 in Millerovo, died 25 January 1909 in Millerovo

**Helena** - born 29 March 1910 in Millerovo, married Peter Johann Unruh in Kuban in 1928, stayed in Russia, 2 children, were eventually able to get to Germany

**Wilhelm** - born 24 December 1911, in Millerovo, escaped to Canada with father in 1927, to Paraguay in 1938, married Luise P Rahn 7 January 1939 in Paraguay, 9 children, immigrated to Canada in 1954, successful contractor, died 12 November 1990 in Winnipeg

**Kornelius** - born 8 March 1915 in Millerovo, died 20 March 1915 in Millerovo

Kornelius involved in evangelizing Russians in the areas where he lived, but also beyond

Leader of the Russian Baptist Church in Millerovo; wife Maria was also involved

Kornelius fled from Russia with his son Wilhelm in 1927, leaving Maria and his daughters

Maria was imprisoned for 4 years; Kornelius was able to get her to Germany in 1936

Kornelius and Maria each wrote about their experiences

Kornelius continued to evangelize among the Russians in Western Europe and North America

Maria died 1 July 1961 of complications of diabetes

Kornelius died 17 June 1974, also in Winnipeg

#### **Martens, Wilhelm Johann**

Born 12 May 1898

Father Minister Johann Martens of Sergeyevka

Together with his brother Johann Johann Martens was offered financial help by Wilhelm

Isaak Dyck to attend *Zentralschule*, probably about 1910-1914

Wilhelm then worked in the mill of Wilhelm Dyck as a bookkeeper for several years,

likely starting in 1914, to repay the loan

Wilhelm then went on to become a teacher

#### **Neufeld, Franz**

Worked as mechanic in the flour mill of Wilhelm Isaak Dyck

On one occasion tried to break into the office safe

Was a Communist Party man

In 1921 employed in a bank in Millerovo

Being jealous, he falsely accused Franz DeFehr and a Russian employee of wrongdoing

They were incarcerated in the GPU prison, and were only rescued through the efforts of Cornelius Abram DeFehr

#### **Nickel, Jakob**

Originally bookkeeper in Froese mill in Barvenkovo

Was a minister

Owner of a large flour mill in Millerovo, valued at 10,000 rubles in 1908

#### **Nickel, Jakob Johann**

Uncle of Dietrich Peter Kroeker, residing in Melitopol in April of 1922

Immigrated to North America sometime before 1922

#### **Nickel, Johann**

One of the first five Mennonite settlers in Millerovo in the spring of 1903

Was seeking better business opportunity for a flour mill

One of the original partners, with Wilhelm Isaak Dyck, Wilhelm J Friesen, David J Klassen and J Siemens in the building of a flour mill in 1903  
Soon dropped out as a partner in the mill, leaving Wilhelm Dyck and Wilhelm Friesen as the principal owners

**Paetkau, J**

Minister of the MB Church in 1927  
Reported on the harvest festival conducted in the MB Church

**Pauls, Jakob**

Engineer  
Refugee in Germany as of February 1921, at Goltzstrasse 36, Berlin

**Pauls, Kornelius Kornelius**

Born 26 May 1884 in Kronsthal, Chortitza Colony  
Parents Kornelius Pauls and Agatha Zacharias  
Anna Isaak, who lost 4 children by drowning 18 June 1926, was the sister of Kornelius  
Married **Paula Pauls** about 1910  
She was born about 1880

Children:

**Katharina** - born about 1910

**Johann** - born about 1912, was also swimming with the Isaak children 18 June 1926, but did not drown, because he could actually swim

**Kornelius** - born about 1915

Kornelius died in 1920 in Millerovo  
Wife Paula lived in Millerovo in 1926, and was visited by Widow Isaak and 5 children in June of 1926, when the 4 children drowned

**Penner, Heinrich**

Owner of an agricultural implement repair shop in operation in 1912

**Penner, Helena Abram**

Born 10 December 1875 in Einlage, Chortitza  
Parents Abram Abram DeFehr and Helena Peters  
Moved to Kronsweide 1883, Petrovka 1888  
Married Widower Franz Janzen, who had 4 daughters, in 1900; moved to Millerovo in 1905  
Husband participated in the building of, and was part owner of the A A DeFehr flour mill  
Franz Janzen died 25 August 1911 in Millerovo  
Helena married Widower **Johann Penner** 2 January 1914 in Millerovo  
Not sure where they lived  
He was from Schoenau, Sagradovka  
Johann had 2 sons, Abraham and Heinrich  
Immigrated to Canada in 1925, lived in Laird, Mulliger, Gem  
Johann died in Gem August 1938  
Helena was in nursing home in Coaldale, died 29 August 1970 in Medicine Hat, Alberta

**Penner, Johann**

(could be the same Johann Penner who assisted Wilhelm Isaak Dyck in the MB Church)  
Born 22 June 1864 in Chortitza Colony

**Married Katharina Dyck**

She was born 11 December 1865 in Rosenthal, Chortitza

Parents Peter Gerhard Dyck and Elisabeth Pries

Baptized 28 May 1884 in Chortitza, Chortitza Colony

Daughter Katharina, fifth of 9 children, was born 21 July 1901 in Apanlee, near the  
Molotschna

She joined the Millerovo MB Church 21 July 1919

Married Alexander Johann Fast, teacher at a private school in 1921

Immigrated to Canada 1n 1925

Family moved to Millerovo in 1909, where Johann was the principal of a private school  
(likely the MB school)

Mother Katharina died 11 October 1924 in Millerovo

Johann died 15 February 1925 in Millerovo

**Penner, Johann**

Assisted Wilhelm Isaak Dyck in the leadership of the Millerovo MB Church

Together with Wilhelm Dyck represented the Millerovo congregation at the MB Convention  
held in Spat, Crimea 17-18 May 1913

**Peters, Johann Franz**

Born about 1875

Children:

**Heinrich** - born about 1909

**Margaretha** - born about 1910

Relative **Franz** - born about 1904

Immigrated to Canada in 1924, settling in Rosthern, Saskatchewan

**Peters, Maria Abram**

Born 16 February 1887 in Kronsweide

Parents Abram Abram DeFehr (Sr) and Helena Peters

Moved to Petrovka in 1888, the to Millerovo 1906 or 1907

Married David Georg Peters in 1909

He was born in 1883

They probably lived in Neuendorf (Shirokaya), Chortitza

6 children:

Surviving her in Canada were: (ages from the immigration list)

Susanna - born about 1911, married an Epp

Helena - born about 1912

Heinrich - born about 1914

Maria - born about 1915, married a Harder

Valentin - born about 1919

Immigrated to Canada in 1922, first lived in Didsbury, Alberta

Her mother, Helena DeFehr, stayed with her until she died in 1931

Husband David died 20 March 1947

Moved to Matsqui, British Columbia in 1949

Joined the MB Church in 1953

In 1973 moved to Calgary with her daughter Helena  
Died 9 February 1979 in Calgary, Alberta

**Peters, Maria Jakob**

Born about 1877

Children:

**David** - born about 1906

**Peter** - born about 1913

**Nikolai** - born about 1916

**Elsa** - born about 1918

**Anna** - born about 1922

Immigrated to Canada in 1924, settling in Rosthern, Saskatchewan

**Poetker, Gerhard**

Married **Elisabeth Koop**

Lived in Tiede, Sagradovka, then Alexanderkrone, Molotschna, then Alexanderheim,  
Barnaul Colony, then with the encouragement of son-in-law Wilhelm Isaak Dyck  
moved to Millerovo and was employed by him

Children: (likely not all are listed)

**Emilie** - born 17 December 1874 in Tiede, Sagradovka

Baptized in Alexanderheim 26 June 1891

Married Wilhelm Isaak Dyck 19 July 1897

Paul - born 21 August 1887 in Alexanderkrone (see separate listing)

In 1916-1917 owned 2 shares of the *Russisch-Amerikanische Muellerei Gesellschaft*

**Poetker, Paul Gerhard**

Born 21 August 1887 in Alexanderkrone

Parents Gerhard Poetker and Elisabeth Koop

Younger brother of Emilie Dyck, wife of Wilhelm Isaak Dyck

Married **Helena Pauls** 13 June 1913 in Reinfeld

Her parents were Daniel Franz Pauls and Katharina Braun

Children:

**Helena Hildegard** - born 11 October 1915 in Millerovo, married John Edward Janz  
25 November 1945, 6 children, died in 1992

**Paul Edward** - born 18 November 1916 in Millerovo, married Maria Dueck  
7 November 1948, 7 children

**Heinrich Paul** - born 17 March 1918 in Millerovo, married Amanda Hulda Lepp  
25 July 1948 in Dalmeny, Saskatchewan, 5 children, the last 4 born in India

**Amalia Katharina** - born 26 October 1919 in Millerovo, married John Baerg  
18 August 1940 in Coaldale, Alberta, 9 children, died in 1995 in  
Red Deer, Alberta

Daniel Werner - born 26 July 1923 in Alexanderkrone, Molotschna

Kornelia (Nellie) Louise - born 28 December 1926 in Herbert, Saskatchewan

Elisabeth Heide - born 6 March 1931 in Saskatchewan

The Poetker family moved to Millerovo as early as 1915

In 1916-1917 Paul owned 1½ shares of the *Russisch-Amerikanisch Muellerei Gesellschaft*

Lived in Millerovo until at least 1919, then moved to Alexanderkrone, then to Herbert,  
Saskatchewan by 1926

Paul died 6 February 1971 in Clearbrook, British Columbia

**Prieb, Heinrich**

4 people, therefore likely **wife** and **2 children**

Received part of a food package from the American Mennonite Relief in July of 1922

**Ratzlaff, Bernhard**

Born 1895

On 1915 picnic picture; on 1917 picture with friends Franz DeFehr and Heinrich DeFehr

Died 1969

**Ratzlaff, Erich**

Born 17 May 1890 in Deutsch Wymyschle, Prussia

Parents Peter Ratzlaff and Wilhelmine Prochnau

Older brother of Gustav

Married **Martha Janzen** 22 September 1912 in Millerovo

She was born 15 May 1892 in Osterwick, Chortitza Colony

After the wedding the couple returned to Deutsch Wymyschle

Moved to Millerovo from Deutsch Wymyschle probably at the same time as the Leonhard

Ratzlaff family, in late 1913

Children:

**Helena** - born 2 August 1913 in Deutsch Wymyschle, died 22 October 1914  
in Millerovo

**Peter** - born 20 October 1914 in Millerovo, back to Deutsch Wymyschle in 1918,  
married Frieda Pauls in 1936, 4 children, drafted during World War II,  
immigrated to Canada in 1948, died 8 February 2002 in Coaldale, Alberta

**Wilhelmine** - born 24 April 1916 in Millerovo, back to Deutsch Wymyschle in 1918,  
married Leonhard Schmidt in 1939, 4 children, immigrated to Canada  
by 1951, died 19 November 2001 in Abbotsford, British Columbia

Gustav - born 15 November 1918 in Deutsch Wymyschle

Franz - born 4 December 1919 in Wonsosz, Prussia

Bernhard - born 18 September 1921 in Wonsosz, Prussia

Frieda - born 9 April 1926 in Wonsosz, Prussia

Hilda - born 15 September 1933 in Wonsosz, Prussia

The family moved from Millerovo back to Deutsch Wymyschle in 1918, then to Wonsosz,  
Prussia, where they stayed until at least 1933

Family members reached Canada after World War II, many settling in Alberta

**Ratzlaff, Gustav**

Born 3 September 1892 in Deutsch Wymyschle, Prussia

Parents Peter Ratzlaff and Wilhemine Prochnau

Younger brother of Erich; on 1915 picnic picture

Married **Maria Janzen** 15 September 1918 in Millerovo

She was born 29 December 1897 in Osterwick, Chortitza Colony

Children:

**Gustav** - born 26 December 1919 in Millerovo, died 28 February 1922 in Millerovo

**Wilhemine** - born 6 June 1922 in Millerovo, to Deutsch Wymyschle with family  
after 1922, to Canada after World War II, married Heinrich Schroeder  
16 January 1954 in Arnold, British Columbia, 1 daughter, died 1 May 1968  
in Vancouver, British Columbia

Erna - born 24 August 1927 in Deutsch Wymyschle

Gustav - born 19 March 1931 in Deutsch Wymyschle

Herbert - born 9 September 1937 in Deutsch Wymyschle

Bernhard - born 28 March 1939 in Deutsch Wymyschle

Father Gustav came to Millerovo about 1913, married in 1918, staying in Millerovo until  
some time after 1922

The family then moved to Deutsch Wymyschle, living there until at least 1939

By 1951 many had immigrated to Canada, living in Alberta and British Columbia

### **Ratzlaff, Leonhard Peter**

Born 18 January 1898

Married Anna Wohlgemuth on 20 April 1898 in Deutsch Wymyschle, Prussia

She was born 25 August 1875

Her parents were Heinrich Wohlgemuth and Julianna Voth

Leonhard was a musician, director of a choir

Moved from Deutsch Wymyschle, Prussia, to Millerovo in 1913 with 4 children, then in 1918  
moved back to Deutsch Wymyschle

Children:

Leonhard - born 23 January 1899 in Deutsch Wymyschle, died 5 September 1904  
in Deutsch Wymyschle

Anna - born 2 August 1902 in Deutsch Wymyschle, died 10 September 1904 in  
Deutsch Wymyschle

**Bernhard** - born 14 December 1904 in Deutsch Wymyschle, died 25 January 1916  
in Millerovo

**Richard** - born 19 March 1908 in Deutsch Wymyschle, 1929 immigrated to Canada,  
married Martha Kliewer, 5 children, died 14 April 1967 in Vancouver

**Hulda** - born 24 December 1909 in Deutsch Wymyschle, married Erhard Ratzlaff,  
4 children, stayed in Deutsch Wymyschle during World War II, immigrated  
to Canada some time before 1949

**Erich** - born 8 August 1911 in Deutsch Wymyschle, married Lydia Ratzlaff,  
6 children, stayed in Prussia/Poland during World War II, immigrated to  
Canada in 1948, was editor of the *Mennonitische Rundschau*, wrote  
*Im Weichselbogen*, the story of the Mennonites in central Poland, and  
*Ein Leben fuer den Herrn*, a biography of Minister D B Wiens, who pioneered  
radio-evangelism in the Soviet Union, Erich died 18 October 1988 in  
Clearbrook, British Columbia

Anna - born 22 March 1913 in Deutsch Wymyschle, died 22 June 1913 in  
Deutsch Wymyschle

Maria - born 1 August 1918 in Deutsch Wymyschle, married David Ratzlaff,



4 children, stayed in Deutsch Wymyschle during World War II, immigrated to Canada after the war

**Redekopp, Benjamin**

Born about 1902-1905

On a Millerovo picnic picture of 1915

**Redekopp, Karl K**

Born about 1882

Wife **Margaretha** - born about 1897

Children:

**Eduard** - born about 1923

**Selma** - born about 1923 (possibly twins?)

Immigrated to Canada, landing 29 May 1925, settling in Edmonton, Alberta

**Redekopp, Peter Karl**

Born about 1882

Wife **Maria Janzen** - born about 1887

Immigrated to Canada, landing 29 May 1925, settling in Edmonton, Alberta

**Reimer, Mr**

Wife **Mrs Reimer**

Son **Johann L** - born 24 June 1909 in Blumenort Sagradovka

Family then moved to Sergeyevka, Fuerstenland Colony, then to Millerovo, then to Osterwick, Chortitza Colony

Immigrated to Canada in 1923, settling in Herbert, Saskatchewan

**Rempel, Abram**

Assisted Wilhelm Isaak Dyck in the leadership of the MB Church

In 1919 succeeded Wilhelm Dyck as leader of the church when the Dyck family fled to the Kuban in 1919

Remained as leader until at least 1923

**Rempel, Abram Dietrich**

Possibly the same person as the Abram Rempel who was the church leader 1919-1923

Born about 1878

Wife **Susanna** - born about 1889

Children:

**Anna** - born about 1911

**Lydia** - born about 1912

**Susanna** - born about 1915

**Maria** - born about 1916

**Johann** - born about 1919

**Katharina** (10 mo) - born about 1923

Immigrated to Canada in 1924, settling in Herbert, Saskatchewan

**Rempel, Johann Gerhard**

Born 8 September 1878 in Rosenthal, Chortitza Colony

Married **Justina Riediger** 17 November 1901

She was born 1 December 1882 in Chortitza, Chortitza Colony

Johann was an engineer in the “Martens, DeFehr and Dyck Machine Factory”

Children:

**Katharina** - born 22 September 1902 in Chortitza

**Susanna** - born 22 September 1902 in Chortitza

**Johann (Ivan)** - born 24 September 1905 in Chortitza

**Peter** - born 28 November 1909 in New York, Ignatyev Colony

**Cornelius** - born 1912 in Millerovo, died 13 January 1994 in Kitchener, Ontario

### **Rempel, Kornelius Gerhard**

Born 11 August 1882 in Rosenthal, Chortitza

Parents Gerhard Gerhard Rempel and Katharina Andres

Mother died when he was 3, father when he was 6

He inherited his father's factory, and worked there for some time

Married **Helena Dyck** 10 January 1908

She was born 25 October 1882 in Rosenthal

Her parents were Peter Gerhard Dyck and Katharina Pries

Children:

**Helena** - born 3 November 1908 in Chortitza, Chortitza, moved to Millerovo, immigrated to Canada in 1924, married Johann Reimer, both died in Kitchener, Ontario

**Katharina** - born 28 November 1911 in Millerovo, immigrated to Canada in 1924, married Isaak Kornelius Epp 11 October 1936 in Kitchener, Ontario, Katharina died 29 April 1989 in Kelowna, British Columbia  
Isaak died 22 August 1998, also in Kelowna

After Kornelius Rempel was married in 1908 he worked as a bookkeeper for a factory in Chortitza, then in Millerovo

In 1914 he entered the *Forsteidienst*, then worked at an office in Moscow

After 4 years of service he returned to Millerovo

Wife Helena died of typhus in Millerovo 18 January 1920

Kornelius married **Katharina Martens** 19 September 1920

Moved from Millerovo to Sagradovka in 1921

Immigrated to Canada in 1924, first staying in Herbert, Saskatchewan, then moving to Kitchener, Ontario in 1926

Kornelius died 15 October 1946, Katharina died 22 October 1954

### **Rempel, Widow Peter**

4 people, therefore presumably **3 children**

Received part of a food package from American Mennonite Relief in July 1922

### **Rempel, Susanna**

Born about 1892

Children:

**Elisabeth** - born about 1913

**Peter** - born about 1916

**Heinrich** - born about 1917

Immigrated to Canada in 1924, settling in Rosthern, Saskatchewan

**Riediger, Jakob**

*Sanitaeter* working on Hospital Train no 163 during World War I

**Riediger, Jakob Peter**

Born 1 February 1883 in Alexanderkrone, Molotschna

Parents Peter P Riediger and Katharina Derksen

Baptized 2 August 1908

Married **Helena Dyck** 23 August 1909

She was born 20 April 1891 in Reinfeld

Parents Wilhelm Isaak Dyck and Maria Riediger

She was baptized 2 August 1908

Jakob was a university-trained engineer, job application was accepted by Wilhelm Dyck

Jakob was sent to Germany to learn the engineering of milling, the worked as an engineer in the mill of Wilhelm Dyck

Served in the *Sanitaetsdienst* during World War I

1916-1917 owned 2 shares of the *Russisch-Amerikanische Muellerei Gesellschaft*

Children:

**Katharina** - born 30 September 1910 in Millerovo, died 2 May 1913 in Millerovo

**Wilhelm** - born 31 August 1912 in Millerovo

**Jakob** - born 29 November 1918 in Millerovo

**Helena** - born 29 November 1918 in Millerovo

**Cornelius** - born 30 September 1923 in Millerovo

Abram - born 2 August 1927 in Morden, Manitoba

Esther - born 14 November 1930 in Morden, Manitoba

Seem to have moved around for the sake of safety, but probably stayed in the Millerovo region during the Russian Civil War and the Communist takeover

Immigrated to Canada on 14 November 1924, arriving in Hepburn Saskatchewan, then moved to Gnadenthal where the Wilhelm Dyck family was located

Eventually moved to Morden, Manitoba by 1927, the last 2 children being born there

Father Jakob died 23 April 1950, and mother Helena died 26 September 1966, both in Morden

**Riediger, Peter**

Probably moved to Millerovo at the encouragement of Wilhelm Isaak Dyck

Was not the father of Jakob Peter Riediger

Became a major shareholder in the milling company *Russisch-Amerikanische Muellerei Gesellschaft*, 1916-1917 owning 11 of the 48 shares

**Sawadsky, Heinrich**

Wife **Elisabeth Rempel**

Children:

**Maria** - born 14 November 1899, to Millerovo in 1911 and likely stayed there until she immigrated to Canada with 2 younger brothers in the autumn of 1924, married Bernhard C Schellenberg in the autumn of 1925, 3 children, lived in Demaine, Main Centre, then in 1961 retired to Swift Current, Saskatchewan, died 30 January 1983

**Louise** - born 1905 in Samara, to Millerovo in 1911, likely staying there until at least

1924, stayed in Russia, married Mitrifan Sargenko in 1930, 3 children,  
1943, with the children, fled westward with the retreating German Army,  
1945 with sister Anna in Germany, 1950 immigrated to Canada, died  
25 July 1978 in Vancouver, British Columbia

**Anna (Nutya)** - in Germany by 1945

**Johann (Hans)** - immigrated to Canada with elder sister Maria in 1924

**Heinrich (Heinz)** - immigrated to Canada with elder sister Maria in 1924

**6 other children**

The family moved to Millerovo in 1911, where father Heinrich was a teacher in a new school  
Heinrich died in 1919, leaving his wife a widow with 11 children

11 people, presumably wife Elisabeth with 10 children received part of a food package  
from the American Mennonite Relief in July 1922

Three of the family, Maria with 2 younger brothers, Johann and Heinrich, immigrated to  
Canada in 1924

The rest likely stayed in Russia

**Sawatzky, A**

At the ordination service of Wilhelm Isaak Dyck on 11 May 1914, Sunday School pupil

A Sawatzky gave a very convincing talk, asking people to be generous in their giving  
in the following collection. It, however, amounted to only 65 rubles

**Sawatzky, Maria**

Born about 1900

Brother **Heinrich** - born about 1903

Brother **Johann** - born about 1909

Immigrated to Canada in 1924, settling in Manitoba

**Schroeder, Peter Peter**

Born 15 August 1876 in Kleefeld, Molotschna

Parents Peter Peter Schroeder and Maria Dick

Lived in Kleefeld as a child, then in his youth the family moved to Muensterberg

He married **Anna Braun** 20 April 1902 in Kara Tschakmak, Crimea

She was born 26 April 1879 in Schoenthal

Her parents were Peter Braun and Elisabeth Fast

Children:

One son died as a child

**Elisabeth (Liese)** - born 16 June 1903 in Muensterberg, Molotschna, 1914 moved  
moved to Millerovo, married Peter Baerg 28 August 1924 in Alexanderfeld,  
Kuban, immigrated to Canada in 1925

**Peter** - born 3 September 1905 in Muensterberg, Molotschna, 1914 moved to  
Millerovo, immigrated to Canada in 1925, married Elisabeth Wall  
6 August 1933 in Culross, Manitoba, Elisabeth died 3 July 1993 in  
Clearbrook, British Columbia, Peter died 16 December 2003, also in  
Clearbrook, British Columbia

**Maria** - born 8 December 1907 in Mensterberg, Molotschna, 1914 moved to  
Millerovo, immigrated to Canada in 1925, married Jakob Jakob Wall

29 June 1932 in Elm Creek, Manitoba, 7 children all born in Culross  
Manitoba

**Anna** - born 16 November 1911, in Muensterberg, Molotschna, 1914 moved to Millerovo, immigrated to Canada in 1925, married Nikolai Jakob Dick 30 August 1933 in Culross, Manitoba, 5 children, the eldest of whom is Eleanore (Esau)

**Heinrich** - born 6 December 1913 in Muensterberg, Molotschna, 1914 moved to Millerovo, immigrated to Canada in 1925, married Katharina (Tina) Penner 28 July 1935 in Springstein, Manitoba, 2 children

**Gerhard** - born 16 September 1915 in Millerovo, immigrated to Canada in 1925, married Helena Neufeld 27 May 1950, 3 children, Gerhard died 13 September 1998 in Winnipeg, Canada

**Cornelius** - born 10 December 1917 in Millerovo, immigrated to Canada in 1925, married Anna Martens, 28 September 1947, 5 children

Martha - born 12 October 1920 in the Kuban, immigrated to Canada in 1925, married Peter Jakob Hildebrandt 26 October 1955, 1 son

Schroeder family first lived in Muensterberg; it is quite probable that Peter owned a motor-driven flour mill during this time

The mill was evaluated at 3,700 rubles in 1908

In 1914 the family moved to Millerovo

In Millerovo Peter owned the Schroeder Flour Mill and the Schroeder Oil Mill together with brothers-in-law Kornelius Braun (brother of his wife) and Jakob Hildebrandt (not certain where the brothers-in-law lived but likely in Millerovo)

In 1909 they fled to Jesk, a port city on the Sea of Azov

After 6 months they returned home

In another 6 months they fled to the Kuban

The whole family, including Elisabeth with husband Peter Baerg, immigrated to Canada in April of 1925, first settling in Plum Coulee, then 4 years later they moved to Elm Creek, Manitoba

Peter retired in 1947, and the couple moved to Winnipeg

Peter died 4 June 1967, Anna died 26 December 1975, both in Winnipeg, Manitoba

The mill buildings in Millerovo still stood in 2000, and appeared to be operating

### **Siemens, J**

One of the first five Mennonite settlers in Millerovo in the spring of 1903

Was seeking better business opportunity for a flour mill

One of the original partners, with Wilhelm Isaak Dyck, Wilhelm J Friesen, David J Klassen and Johann Nickel in the building of a flour mill in 1903

Soon dropped out as a partner in the mill, leaving Wilhelm Dyck and Wilhelm Friesen as the principal owners

### **Steltz, J**

Received part of a food package from American Mennonite Relief in July 1922

### **Sudermann, Aron**

*Sanitaeter* working on Hospital Train No 163 during World War I

**Thiessen, David Abram**

Born about 1881

Wife **Helena** - born about 1884

Children:

**David** - born about 1911

**Wilhelmina** - born about 1913

**Anna** - born about 1917

Immigrated to Canada in 1924, settling in Rosthern, Saskatchewan

**Thiessen, Erna Peter**

Born about 1880

Children: **David** - born about 1913; **Irma** - born about 1916

Immigrated to Canada in 1924, settling in Rosthern Saskatchewan

**Thiessen (Tiessen), H**

Previously labourer, by 1925 appointed manager of the Martens, DeFehr and Dyck factory

**Unger, Abram**

4 people, therefore presumably **wife** and **2 children**

Received part of a food package from American Mennonite Relief in July 1922

**Unrau, Heinrich Heinrich** (see also Maria Unrau - Simferopol)

Married **Maria Ediger** 29 January 1905, **6 children**

One of the owners of an agricultural implement manufacture and repair shop in operation  
in 1912 "Ediger Brothers and Unrau"

Heinrich died 7 November 1919 in Millerovo, Maria died 14 December 1932 in Simferopol

**Voth, Benjamin**

Two people, therefore presumably also his **wife**

**Warkentin, Heinrich Abraham**

Born about 1868

Wife **Elisabeth** - born about 1866

Daughter **Elisabeth** - born about 1909

Immigrated to Canada in 1924, settling in Rosthern, Saskatchewan

**Warkentin, Helena Nikolai**

Born about 1901

Immigrated to Canada in 1924, settling in Winkler, Manitoba

**Warkentin, Peter P**

Born about 1890

Wife **Agatha** - born about 1903

Immigrated to Canada in 1924, settling in Rosthern, Saskatchewan

**Wiebe, Widow David**

2 people, therefore presumably **1 child**

Received part of a food package from American Mennonite Relief in July 1922

**Wiebe, Helena Peter**

Born about 1901, immigrated to Canada in 1924, settling in Rosthern, Saskatchewan

**Wiebe, Widow Johann**

4 people, therefore presumably **3 children**

Received part of a food package from American Mennonite Relief in July 1922

**Wiebe, Johann**

Born 9 September 1878

Married **Anna Giesbrecht**

She was born 28 October 1885

Her parents were Johann Gerhard Giesbrecht and Elisabeth Krause

Children:

**Elisabeth** - born 26 February 1908 in Millerovo, immigrated to Canada in 1925,  
married Gerhard Heide 17 October 1926 in Kronsart, Manitoba,  
4 children, died 28 April 1999 in Winkler, Manitoba

**Wilhelm (Bill)** - born 14 May 1912 in Millerovo, immigrated to Canada in 1925,  
married Gertrude Peters 10 September 1939 in Kronsart, Manitoba,  
4 children, Wilhelm died 12 March 2001 and Gertrude died 27 October 2001,  
both in Abbotsford, British Columbia

**Aganetha (Neta)** - born 20 February 1917 in Millerovo, married Norman Miller

Johann was bookkeeper for the "A A DeFehr and Sons" flour mill (1910 photograph)

Johann died in 1919

Anna with 3 children immigrated to Canada in 1925, settling in Kronsart, Manitoba

She married Johann Bernhard Friesen 23 June 1926 in Canada

Possibly had 2 more children:

Katie

Leni

Anna died 5 January 1981

**Wiens, Jakob Gerhard**

Born about 1873

Wife **Maria** - born about 1889

Children:

**Wilhelm** - born about 1906

**Franz** - born about 1910

**Abram** - born about 1912

**Cornelius** - born about 1913

**Ivan** - born about 1916

**Olga** - born about 1917

Immigrated to Canada in 1924, settling in Dalmeny, Saskatchewan

**Wiens, Susanna**

Born about 1902

Brother **Gerhard** - born about 1911

Immigrated to Canada, arriving in Winnipeg late 1924, then on to Dalmeny, Saskatchewan

**Winter, Mr**

Wife **Mrs Winter**

Had at least **4 sons** besides Abram

Son **Abram** - born 25 June 1912 in Millerovo

Married Helena Warkentin about 1937



Had a total of 11 children, not sure how many born in Millerovo  
By 1939 living in Brazil, was baptized that year and joined the  
Mennonite Church in Witmarsum  
Some time before 1952 to Curitiba, Brazil  
Abram died 16 February 1969 in Curitiba, Brazil

### **Immigration to Canada in 1924**

1924 seemed to be a banner year for migration from Millerovo to Canada. At least 24 family units, consisting of 98 individuals, went directly from Millerovo to Canada. Fourteen were complete family units, 8 were with mother only, one with father only and the other with siblings only.

Destination in Canada was:

Rosthern, Saskatchewan - 15  
Herbert, Saskatchewan - 4  
Dalmeny, Saskatchewan - 2  
Manitoba - 2

Besides these there were many others originally from Millerovo, living in the Kuban, having fled there, mostly in 1919, who also immigrated in 1924. Some of these first immigrated to Mexico in 1924, then eventually to Canada in 1926.



Abram Abram and Helena (nee Peters) DeFehr

Abram was original owner of "A A DeFehr and Sons"  
flour mill



The extended A A Defehr family about 1910

Back row l to r: Johann Penner, David Peters, Heinrich, Margaretha,  
Elisabeth and Cornelius DeFehr, Abram DeFehr, Jakob Klassen

Front row: Helena Penner, Maria Peters, Helena DeFehr (nee Peters), Franz, Abram A DeFehr,  
Helena DeFehr (nee Paetkau), Katharina Klassen



Franz DeFehr, Bernhard Ratzlaff and  
Heinrich Defehr in 1917

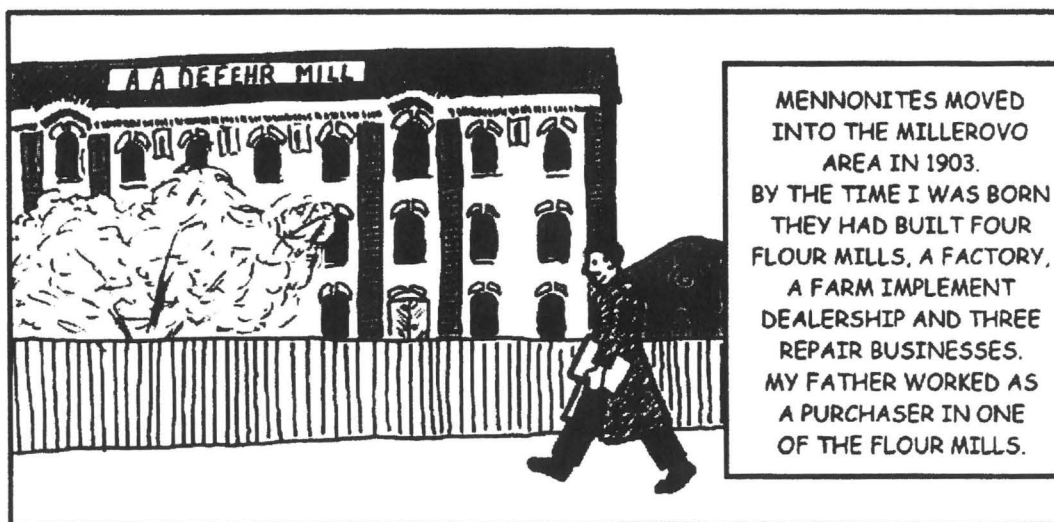
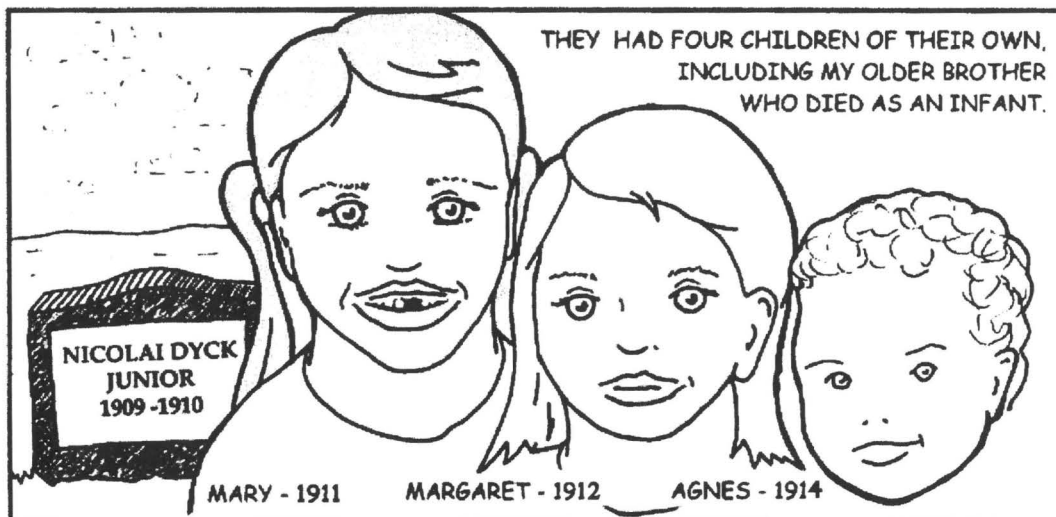
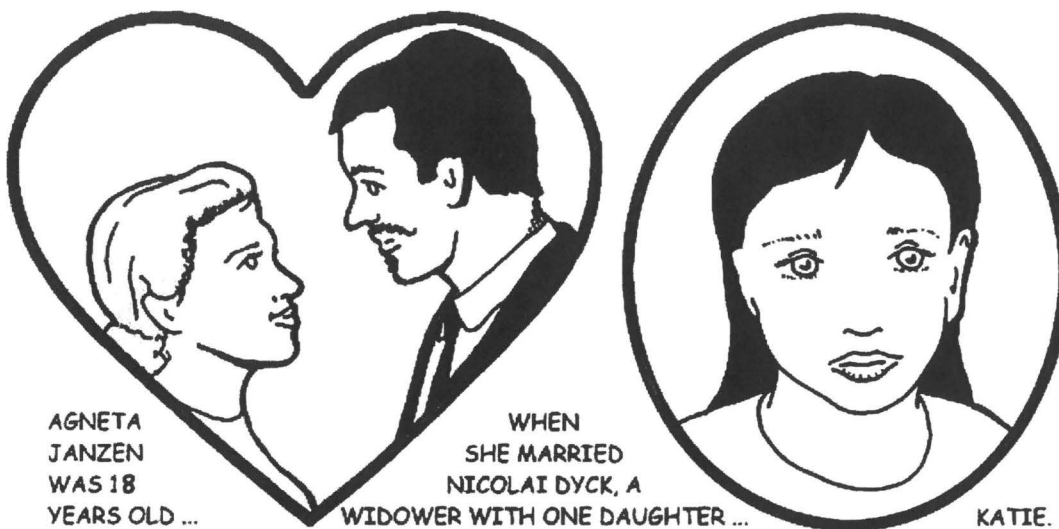


Susanna and Katharina Dyck  
Susanna married cousin  
Wilhelm Dyck  
Katharina married David  
Klassen



Millerovo with Tina Froese in the foreground

Part of the life-story of Maria Dyck (later she married Nikolai Thiessen)  
as illustrated by her grandson, cartoonist Richard Rempel

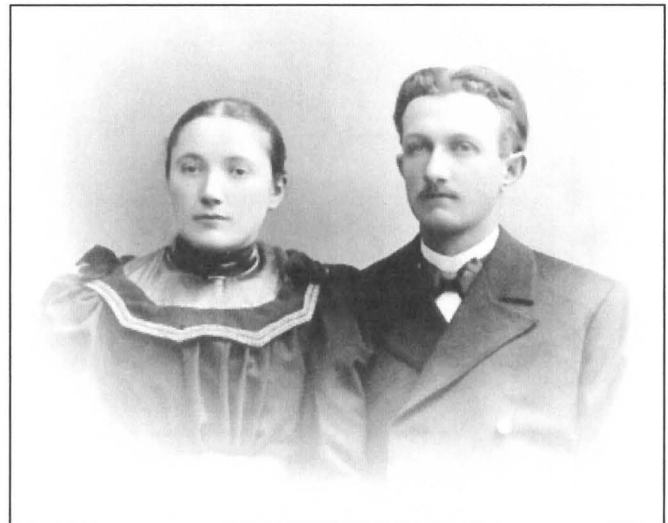




Front row l to r mill owners A A DeFehr (Jr), A A DeFehr (Sr)  
and F Janzen  
at the table Mr Smutik and Johann Wiebe, bookkeeper  
1910



Anna and Peter Schroeder in 1952  
at their Golden Wedding Anniversary



Anna and Peter Schroeder in 1903  
Peter was later a mill owner



Millerovo picnic about 1915

Front row l to r Wilhelm Dyck, Abram Klassen, Maria Janzen  
Heinrich DeFehr

Second row Maria Klassen, Elisabeth and Cornelius DeFehr,  
Anna (Nut) Krause, Susanna Dyck, Bernhard and Gustav Ratzlaff,  
Benjamin Redekopp



Helena (nee Paetkau) and Abram  
DeFehr 1906



Katharina (nee DeFehr) and  
Jakob Klassen 1912

## MENNONITE INSTITUTIONS

### Mennonite Brethren Church

Affiliated with the Einlage, Chortitza Mennonite Brethren congregation, from which most of the settlers came. They shared an elder with the Einlage congregation for some time

A group of businessmen arrived in Millerovo in the spring of 1903, and immediately selected a place for a church; they built a frame structure with a seating capacity of 40-50. Then organized an MB Church under the leadership of Wilhelm Isaak Dyck

Constructed a new beautiful brick church building by 1906

Possibly at first school was held in the church building, later a large addition was constructed at the rear of the building, and this became the school

The building was shared by the entire German community, including some members of the Mennonite Church, Baptists and Lutherans

Conducted all the services in High German

Membership did not exceed 140

Had a good Sunday School and a large choir

Franz Franz Isaak lived in Millerovo 1906-1908, and was active in the church.

Despite moving to neighbouring Glubokaya to establish a milling business, he was ordained as a minister by the Millerovo church in 1910. He was a representative of the Millerovo church, together with Wilhelm Dyck, at an MB convention in 1918

Baptismal service was held 20 July 1908 in which there were 9 candidates. A number of members of the "Committee for the Evangelization of Russia" were present because of a meeting they were going to have 21 July; some also served by preaching. Franz Isaak reported on the day in the *Friedensstimme*, and wished the newly baptized members God's blessing and protection.

Leader Wilhelm Dyck was ordained as elder 11 October 1914 by Elders Gerhard Regehr of Reinfeld and Kornelius Fehr of Orenburg. A Sunday School pupil, A Sawatzky, gave an inspiring talk encouraging generous giving for the collection, although it only amounted to 65 rubles

Wilhelm Dyck was assisted in his work by David Johann Klassen, Johann Penner and Abram Rempel

Itinerant ministers visited Millerovo. Elder Herman Neufeld listed Millerovo, Barvenkovo, Borissovo and Memrik for 1915

J J Nickel listed as a deacon in 1913

Abram Rempel succeeded Wilhelm Dyck as leader in 1919 when the Dyck family fled to the Kuban, staying in that position until 1923

Rempel and his family immigrated to Canada in 1924

On 3 July 1922 Abram Rempel as leader, and Aron Janzen as secretary, wrote a letter of thanks to A Miller of American Relief in Moscow for five \$10 food packets that had arrived. They were distributed among: Abram Unger (4 people), Abram Janzen (1 person), Goertz (1 person), Heinrich Prieb (4 people), Widow Wilhelm Loewen (7 people), Widow H Sawadsky (11 people), Widow Peter Rempel (4 people), Widow Johann



Wiebe (4 people), Widow David Wiebe (2 people), Johann Heckmann (3 people), Widow P Harder (1 Person), Benjamin Voth (2 people), Mrs H Guenter (3 people), J Steltz (1 person)

It was pointed out that with the economic state of the membership, being in the worker class, and in poor economic circumstances, at least another 20 packages would be needed.

Among the group were 7 widows

In 1924 many of the members immigrated to Canada, quite a number arriving in Rosthern, Saskatchewan

At the *Allgemeine Mennonitische Bundeskonferenz* held in Moscow 13-18 January 1925 it was reported that the once flourishing Mennonite Brethren Church was virtually disbanded, since most members has left because of religious persecution. Those remaining had a deep desire for a true Christian life. There was no representative from Millerovo at the conference

In 1927, Minister J Paetkau reported on a harvest festival at which a collection was raised for some home missions

### **Mennonite Cemetery**

A plot of land was given to the Mennonites as cemetery

### **Mennonite Church**

There was a small Mennonite group which also met in Millerovo. It likely shared most facilities and likely worship services with the MB Church

### **Elementary School**

David Johann Klassen was invited to be a teacher 1904. He boarded in the home of Wilhelm Isaak Dyck, and in 1905 married their daughter, Katharina Dyck

He likely continued teaching until 1909, when the Klassens moved to Kantemirovka

The Millerovo school was held in the Mennonite Brethren church building. When the new building was constructed in 1906 a special wing was built for the school

Johann Penner was principal from 1909 on, possibly into the early 1920s

Heinrich Sawadsky was a teacher in Millerovo 1911 to 1919, likely in this school

He died in 1919

Franz Franz Isaak was likely a teacher in the school, around 1918

Alexander Johann Fast was a teacher in the school. He married the daughter of the principal, Katharina Penner, in 1921

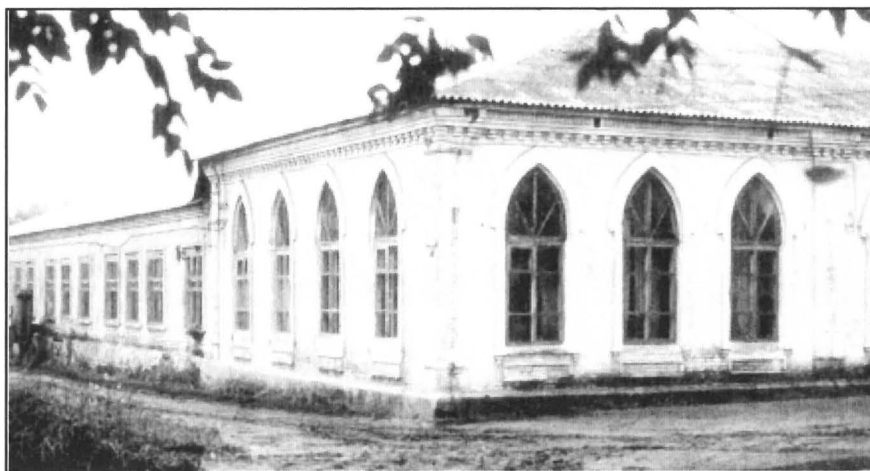


Mennonite Brethren  
Church and school

Church-school complex



Rear view of church-school building in 1906



Church-school building in 1995

## MENNONITE EVENTS

### **The Ordination of Wilhelm Isaak Dyck as Elder**

The Millerovo Mennonite Brethren Church was established about 1903, and slowly grew over the next decade. It was an affiliate of the Einlage MB Church, being served by the same elder. In time the Millerovo congregation felt that it should have its own elder. So it was that after the MB Convention held in Millerovo on 9-10 May 1914, on the next day, Sunday 11 May, the ordination service was held. There were 40 participants from beyond the local congregation; most were ministers, eight were elders. There had been light rain the previous few days, which would help the crops, settle the dust and clear the air. The sanctuary was decorated, the end wall with skillfully placed flowers surrounding the Bible verses which were the mottos for the day:

“This is the day that the Lord hath made

Let us rejoice and be glad in it.”

“O Lord, help, let it be successful.”

The day began at 8:30 AM with a prayer meeting led by Wilhelm Dyck; he based it on Psalm 95, verses 2 and 7. Many responded with praise, thanks and requests. Dyck then welcomed all present in the name of the local congregation, of the choir and of himself personally. The choir sang a song of greeting.

The ordination orations were delivered by Elder Gerhard Regehr of Reinfeld and Elder Kornelius Fehr of Orenburg. Elder Regehr based his message on 1 Peter 5:1-11, pointing out that the position of elder had many Biblical promises, but there were also considerable obligations. Elder Fehr, on the basis of John 21:15-18, emphasized that being a fisher of men required humility and love, not strength and force. The church required an elder to function as a servant, not a king or a general.

Elder Regehr asked Wilhelm and his wife Emilie if they could carry the burden of the position, if they were willing to accept the call of God and the congregation. They answered, “As God will give grace.” With the couple kneeling and the congregation standing the Elders Regehr and Fehr fulfilled the ordination by the laying on of hands. Many present, especially fellow ministers, greeted the couple and wished them God’s blessings.

According to the wishes of the local congregation Wilhelm Dyck was asked to preach a sermon at this point, even though it was hoped that it could be brief. Using Psalm 18, verses 14 and 25, as a basis, Dyck emphasized that it was necessary to love people to bring them to God.

For the midday meal the guests were invited into individual homes, despite the opinion of the correspondent who described the event, that communal meals were preferable. After a break of one and a half hours missionary Johann Wiens told a very interesting story for the children. His own two children, dressed in Indian costumes, joined Wiens and his wife in singing a number of Indian songs.

A Millerovo Sunday School student, A Sawatzky, addressed the gathering, pointing out that some people did not give generously to missions, nor happily. They were like trees that do not produce shade, leaves or fruit; they might even be angry at those who do contribute. Despite this convincing admonition the collection only amounted to 65 rubles.

There were two more sermons in the afternoon. The elder of the Crimea MB Church of

Schoental portrayed the life of the Apostle Paul using Acts 20:17-18. Elder Jakob Wiens of Siberia shared some of his experiences, pointing out that God did not appoint people to a life of happiness, but a life of service.

The local church had in advance determined that they would ask all ministers and elders present to participate, but restricted each talk to 10 minutes. Despite protest by some that they could not even finish the introduction in such a short time, the event went reasonably well.

The new Elder, Wilhelm Isaak Dyck, closed the proceedings with a word borrowed from Jacob after he had heard that Joseph was alive and well, "It is enough!" The responsibility as outlined this day was great, but the blessings and anticipated fruit were plentiful.

The festivities were closed by the singing of "Now Thank We All Our God."

### **The Escape from Millerovo**

Revolution had toppled the Czarist government. After the conclusion of World War I there was anarchy and civil war in many parts of Russia. In the Millerovo area the principal conflict was between the Red Communist forces, and the Whites lead by the Cossacks. The Cossacks dominated the region in early 1919, but by May the Reds were again in control. During this time a large number of the leading citizens and businessmen of Millerovo, about 100, were arrested and imprisoned. Some were executed; others were able to purchase their lives with huge sums of money. Jakob Isaak, son of Chemical and Paint Factory owner Jakob Isaak, was shot when he tried to get away without paying the ransom. Most families were displaced from their homes; for example, the C A DeFehr family had to move into one room of a relative's house.

When the Whites returned to power the people were allowed to return to their own homes, to repair and operate their businesses. But the feeling was that this was only a temporary respite, so plans were made to escape. It was felt that the Kuban area in the Caucasus Mountains was less under the influence of the Communists, and therefore safer.

In December of 1919 some of the Mennonite businessmen were able, through the influence of workers in the implement factory and the local Cossack officials, to shunt eight freight cars onto the track beside the A A DeFehr mill. This was hidden from view by a high fence.

After nightfall on a cold December 7, ten families, together with whatever they could take with them, loaded onto the freight cars. The people were: Wilhelm I Dyck with wife Emilie and children Amalie, Wilhelm and Agathe; Jakob and Katharina Klassen; Jakob and Helena Riediger; Abram and Helena DeFehr (Sr) with daughter Margaretha; Abram and Helena DeFehr (Jr) and five children; Cornelius and Elisabeth DeFehr and children Elisabeth, Abram, Cornelius and Wilhelm; Heinrich DeFehr (single); Kornelius and Maria Martens and children Maria, Susanna, Helena and Wilhelm; Jakob Schulz (engineer in the Martens, DeFehr and Dyck factory); another Jakob Klassen family, and a number of employee families were also included.

C A DeFehr lay unconscious in bed at the time with typhoid fever, so his wife Elisabeth made all of the arrangements for the family. The medical doctor for the implement factory was kind enough to accompany the DeFehrs as far as Rostov to look after Cornelius.

After midnight on December 7 all had boarded, the cars were locked by the railway officials, and they were on their way into the cold night (-30 degrees). They had left everything behind - almost everything. C A DeFehr left 30,000 rubles in the implement factory, presumably to meet factory expenses and payroll. Wilhelm Dyck had sold a mill for one million four hundred thousand

rubles, taking along this ready cash to help with future expenses.

The 500 kilometres to the Kuban went through Rostov-on-Don. The usual scheduled time to reach Rostov was 8 hours. But the circumstances were different. The rail tracks were crowded with refugee and military trains, so quite often their freight cars were uncoupled and shunted onto side tracks. Eventually they were able to persuade the officials to again attach their cars to military trains to keep going. At last, after about ten days, they reached Rostov. Cornelius DeFehr's condition had improved, so the doctor did not need to accompany them further. Kornelius Martens got off the train at Rostov to make arrangements for his oldest daughter, Maria, to continue her education in that city. Jakob Schulz, in the meantime, convinced mother Maria Martens that it would not be safe to leave daughter Maria in the potentially dangerous city of Rostov, and that she should continue on with the family. Schulz himself, together with his sister, would look after the education. This view prevailed. It is of interest that one and a half years later Jakob married the beautiful 17- year-old Maria.

From Rostov the remaining part of the journey to the Kuban region went without interruption. They arrived at Bogoslavskaya, railway depot for the Mennonite settlements, on December 19. There they were greeted and accepted into the homes of the people of Wohldemfuirst (also known as Velikoknyazheskoye). The C A DeFehr family, for example, was hosted in the home of Johann Kornelsen.

The original hope of all involved was undoubtedly to return to Millerovo in the near future. In 1923 Lenin was forced to proclaim a New Economic Policy which allowed some of the former owners to reclaim their properties. C A DeFehr was in Rostov negotiating the possible return of the implement factory when a newspaper article caught his attention. Apparently a heavy piece of machinery was being lifted in the factory when a chain broke. The machine fell to the floor, broke through, and revealed that underneath the owners had hidden many of their valuables. The newspaper article describing this find exuded such hate that DeFehr concluded that it was wiser not to proceed with further negotiations.

In time most of the Kuban refugees felt that there was no hope of returning to Millerovo. Most stayed in the Kuban area until 1924 or 1925, and eventually immigrated to Canada.

### **Tragedy in Millerovo**

Widow Jakob (Anna) Isaak, formerly of Millerovo, now residing in the Kuban, was visiting her sister-in-law, Widow Kornelius (Paula) Pauls. She brought her five youngest children along. Anna had heard that it might even be possible to reclaim the house they had previously abandoned. The older son Abram saw them off at the train station in the Kuban.

On 18 June 1926 in Millerovo it was a very warm day. The children asked Anna Isaak if they could go swimming at a local swimming spot about two verst away. At first the mother was reluctant, but when the eldest daughter, Agnes, assured her that she would take care of the younger siblings, off they went.

The first to get into the water was the 12-year-old Agathe. She stepped into a hole beyond her depth, and "went under." Brother Peter, who could swim a bit, jumped in to save her. Finally Agnes and Tina, neither of whom could swim, also jumped in to help. Eventually, probably because drowning people hold onto anything nearby, all four drowned. Six-year-old Willy stood by and watched from the shore, helpless. Eleven-year-old cousin, Johann Pauls, also in the water, did not

drown because he could swim. Neighbouring fishermen were called, and the bodies taken out of the water. They were loaded onto a wagon, then taken to the hospital, where, after unsuccessful attempts at resuscitation, they were pronounced dead. The four bodies were then taken to the church basement, placed on ice, and prepared for the funeral. The elder son, Abram, who had stayed behind in the Kuban, was sent for. At first he could not comprehend the extent of the tragedy, not really believing the news. He was finally convinced when he saw the bodies of his four siblings.

The funeral was held two days later, on Pentecost Sunday, June 20 at 8 AM. There was widespread participation, with hardly a dry eye in the congregation. Text for the funeral oration was Hosea 2:16-17. After the funeral the coffins were placed onto four wagons, and accompanied by singing, were taken to the cemetery. All four children were buried in one grave.

This tragic event was reported in the paper *Unser Blatt* on October of 1926. The family was that of Jakob Isaak, former owner of a paint and chemical factory in Millerovo. They had fled to the Kuban, likely in late 1919, and the father died there 10 September 1925, leaving Anna a widow with six children. After the tragedy only the eldest and the youngest remained.



Funeral in Millerovo 20 June 1926

I Older brother Abram, II Mother of the children, III Younger  
brother Wilhelm (Willy), IV Grandmother

In the coffins: l back Peter, l front Agathe, r back Tina, r front Agnes



## MENNONITE BUSINESS

Mennonites first settled in Millerovo in 1903 because of the business opportunities the city offered. It was situated on a railway, and was surrounded by rich agricultural land. Within a decade a considerable Mennonite business group developed. It was known as the "*Millerovo Geschaeftsgruppe*," with most of the businesses and many of their residences located on the *Nemezkaia Uliza* or "*Die Deutsche Strasse*." C A DeFehr mentions that in 1913 there were four flour mills, one factory, three implement repair shops and one implement dealership.

It is somewhat peculiar that the only Millerovo business listed on the *Forstei* Taxation list of 1908 is the mill owned by Jakob Nickel, yet there certainly were other flourishing enterprises at the time. The Mennonite community of Russia had to pay for the upkeep of the *Forstei* camps, so it is hoped that the Millerovo businessmen paid their fair share in some other way.

By and large the business community in Millerovo must have felt that it did not need to advertise to Mennonites. From 1903 to 1920 only one advertisement from this group could be found in the *Christlicher Familienkalender*, a full page featuring the Paint and Chemical Factory of Jakob Isaak.

Specifically documented businesses were:

### **A A DeFehr and Sons**

Abram Abram DeFehr (Sr) moved from Petrovka to Millerovo in 1906 or 1907

In 1907 he, together with son Abram Abram DeFehr (Jr), son-in-law Franz Janzen, and likely son-in-law Jakob Klassen and son Heinrich, built a large three story steam-powered flour mill. There was also a one-story administrative building

In 1910 Johann Wiebe was a bookkeeper for the mill

The mill employed son Heinrich Abram DeFehr as salesman, at which he appeared to be quite successful

Probably part-owners by 1917 were C A Defehr, Heinrich Klassen and J Klassen

After the Civil War the Communist government expropriated the mill

Two stories were added to the main building in 1964

In 1995 the mill was still operating, but now has ceased to function

The one-story administrative building is now a bakery

### ***Donische Gesellschaft***

A Millerovo based business owned by Wilhelm Isaak Dyck, Wilhelm Friesen, Johann Nickel, and J Siemens

The group built a fairly large mill in Millerovo in 1903, called the "Don Mill"

They also seem to have owned a steam-powered flour mill in Smolyanaya

*Forstei* tax assessment of the value of the mill in Smolyanaya in 1908 was 40,000 rubles

There were 3 other Mennonite owned steam-powered mills in Smolyanaya; this one was by far the largest

### **Ediger Brothers and Unrau**

An implement manufacturing and repair shop

Likely owned by David David Ediger, another Ediger brother (specific name not known),

and Heinrich Heinrich Unrau

In operation in 1912

### **Heinrich Penner Shop**

Agricultural implement repair shop owned by Heinrich Penner

In operation in 1912

### **Isaak, Jakob - Paint and Chemical Factory**

Owner Jakob Isaak moved from Orenburg to Millerovo sometime after 1907

Located on *Deutsche Strasse*, telephone No 11

Advertised in *Christlicher Familienkalender* in 1914

Had oil-based and lacquer paint, all purpose use

Agent for other types of paint, as well as roof, wall and floor coverings, such as linoleum

Upon request would send out a price list

Together with other business owners imprisoned, and bribe demanded for release in 1919

Son Jakob shot because he tried to escape without paying

Abandoned factory and home, likely late 1919 or early 1920, the family fled to the Kuban

Isaak died 10 September 1925 of a stroke in the Kuban

### **Martens, DeFehr and Dyck Implement Factory**

Established in 1904 by:

Kornelius Jakob Martens - production manager

Cornelius A DeFehr - general director

Opened up a workshop and implement dealership with a modest initial investment of 2,500 rubles

Got a loan from the bank for 20,000 rubles with which they purchased machines and equipment necessary for the manufacture of agricultural machinery

Produced mowers, seeding machines and threshing machines

In the second year they produced 16 seeding machines, in the third year several hundred

After 5 years they had 50 employees

They also started producing hydraulic oil presses for processing flax and sunflower seeds and also cylindric mills

Johann Rempel was the chief engineer and draftsman

In 1909 Wilhelm Isaak Dyck, father-in-law of the two owners, became the third partner, likely to help with the finances

Prices for products were roughly: drills (seeding machines), 140-200 rubles; grain cutting machines, about 160 rubles; threshing machines, 650-850 rubles; oil refineries installed 3,000-6,000 rubles; flour mills installed, 8,000-35,000 rubles.

Annual pre-war business volume reached one million rubles

At an exhibition Kornelius Martens won 2 gold medals for designs produced by the factory

There were contracts from within Russia, but also from abroad; in one six month period they produced 900 fly-wheels of various sizes for Daimler-Benz of Germany

Just before World War I there were 100-120 employees, rising to 200 during the war

70% of the employees were Russians

Average daily wage was about 2.5 rubles

Social security benefits included those required by government regulations

After 3 years employment the workers could participate in a profit sharing plan  
Soon after the onset of World War I the company was denied bank credits because it was owned by "Germans." They were asked to quickly repay the 200,000 rubles they owed. After some time this policy was rescinded, but by then the company did not require additional funding

During the war the company was asked to manufacture transmission systems for use in other government factories as well as casings for land mines and hand grenades. The owners were actually somewhat relieved when the revolution broke out before they had to deliver the latter two products

On the basis of producing vital materials for the government the factory management and workers were excused from military service

With the expropriations and brutal treatments expected with Communist takeover, the extended Dyck and DeFehr families fled to the Kuban 7 December 1919 leaving nearly everything behind, including 30,000 rubles in cash in the factory. They apparently hid some valuables in a secret room under the factory

Before immigrating to Canada in 1925 Cornelius DeFehr paid a visit to the factory  
H Thiessen, previously a laborer in the factory, had been appointed manager. DeFehr said one last farewell to his former employees

Apparently the machine factory has been expanded and is still functioning (2005)

#### **Nickel, Jakob**

Large steam-powered flour mill owned by Jakob Nickel

Valued at 10,000 rubles in 1908, according to the *Forstei* Taxation list

#### **Penner, Heinrich**

Agricultural implement repair shop

In operation in 1912

#### ***Russisch-Amerikanische Muellerei Gesellschaft***

1903 the first Mennonite families moved into Millerovo

Wilhelm Isaak Dyck together with partners Wilhelm J Friesen, Johann Nickel and J Siemens built a small rolling mill. It was called the "Don Mill," owned by the *Donischen Gesellschaft*. It had a large smokestack, and could produce 1,500 pud of wheat four in 24 hours

Apparently Nickel and Siemens soon dropped out of the partnership

In 1907 Dyck went to the United States to purchase milling equipment in Minneapolis

Using this imported machinery, a large, six-story mill was constructed in 1908

Large windows provided significant daylight to the interior of the mill

Since much of the equipment was imported from the United States it was commonly called the "American Mill"

Two story brick administrative building

This mill could produce 5,000 pud of wheat flour in 24 hours

Exact ownership and profits of the mill changed considerably from time to time

Dyck used the ownership and profits of the mill to help his children and other relatives

In 1916-17 joint owners of the company were:

There was a total of 48 shares

Wilhelm Isaak Dyck.....	14½ shares
Wilhelm Friesen (one of the original owners).....	11 shares
Peter Riediger.....	11 shares
David Dyck (probably brother of Wilhelm Dyck).....	4 shares
David Dyck (not sure of his relationship).....	2 shares
Jakob Riediger (son-in-law of Wilhelm Dyck).....	2 shares
Gerhard Poetker (father-in-law of Wilhelm Dyck).....	2 shares
Paul G Poetker (wife's brother).....	1½ shares

During World War I the mill owners converted the upper floor of the administrative building into a 20-bed hospital for wounded soldiers, run by Elisabeth DeFehr, wife of C A DeFehr

Letter written by Dyck on 9 August 1918 says that they had sold the big mill for one million four hundred thousand rubles. The smaller mill was working day and night

Wilhelm Friesen (the other large investor) and his wife were planning to go to Germany

After the Civil War the Communist government expropriated the mill

Apparently the mill buildings and the adjoining machine factory are standing unused, but there is a very large sunflower oil-pressing plant in the area

#### **Schroeder Flour Mill**

#### **Schroeder Oil Mill**

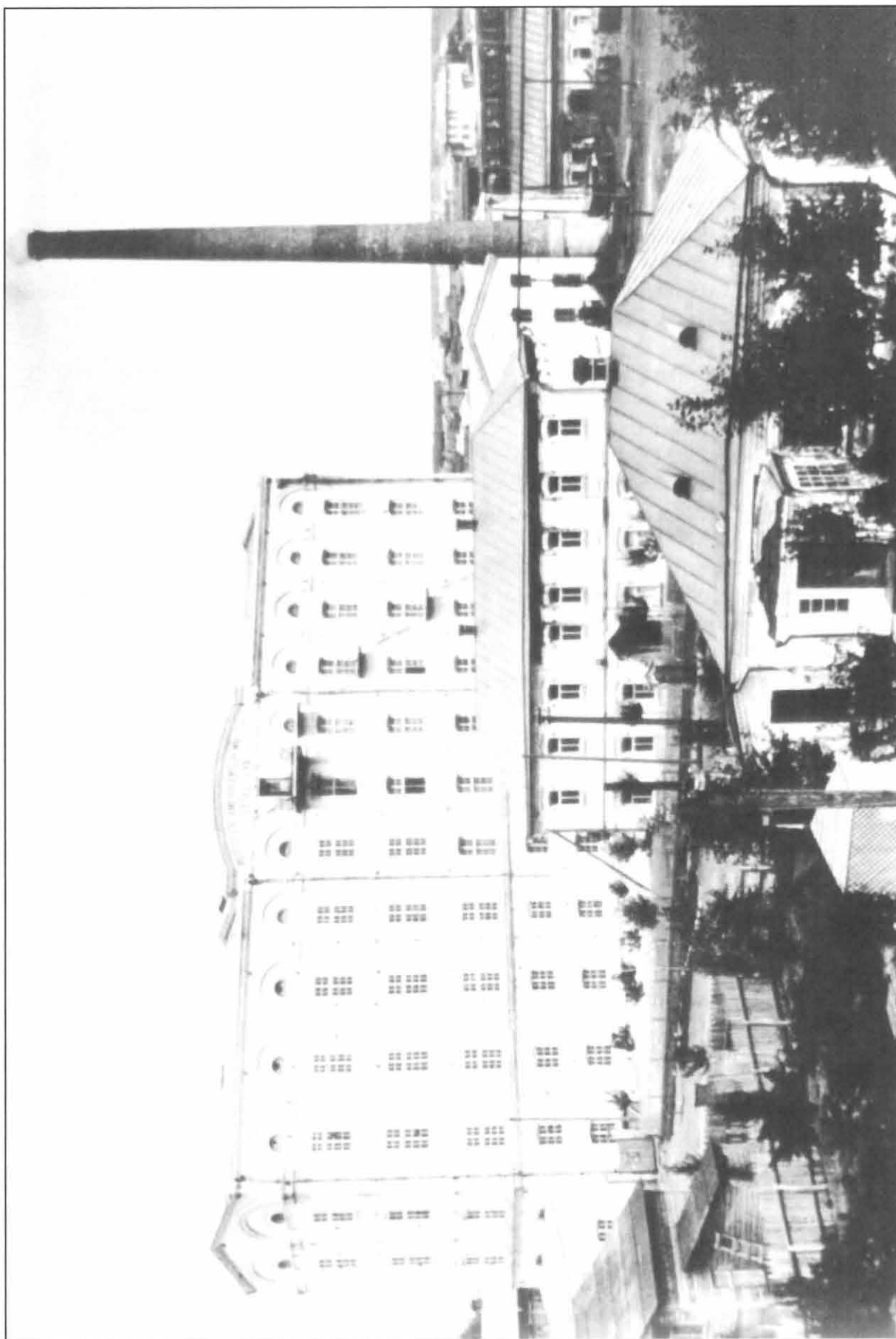
Peter Peter Schroeder and his family moved to Millerovo from Muensterberg in 1914

He, together with brothers-in-law Kornelius Braun and Jacob Hildebrandt, owned a flour mill and an oil press. The Brauns and Hildebrandts likely lived in Millerovo

In 1919 the Schroeders fled to Jesk, a port city on the Sea of Azov, then when there seemed to be less danger returned to Millerovo in 5 months

After another 6 months, 2 weeks before Christmas, they again fled, this time to the Kuban, then in 1925 emigrated to Manitoba, Canada

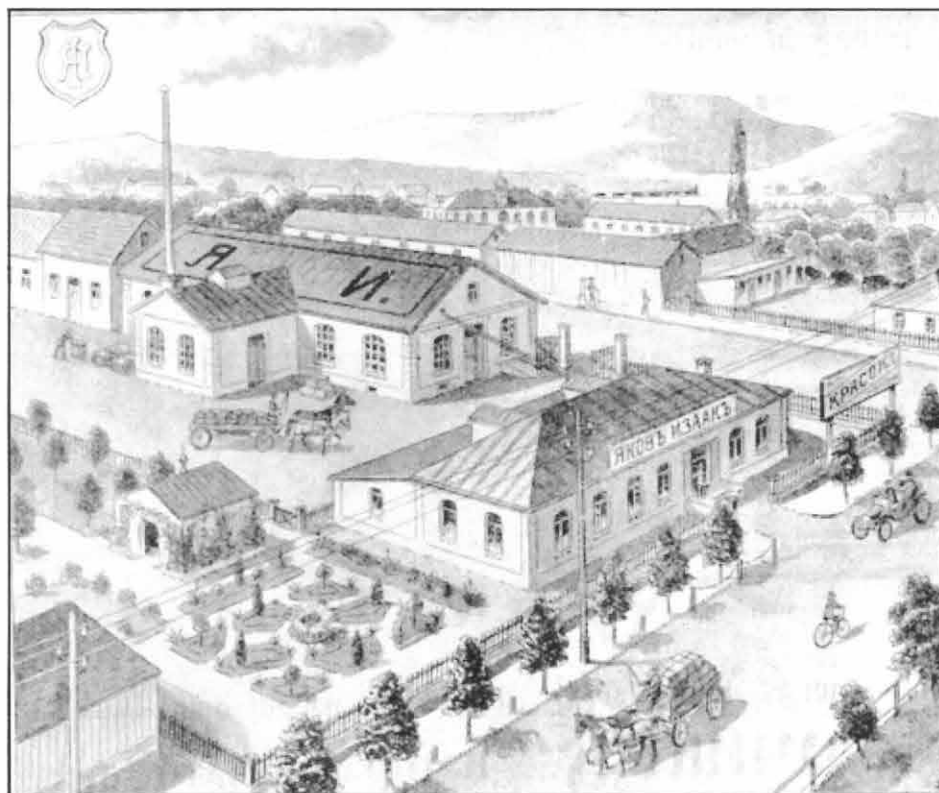
At a visit to Millerovo in 2000 the buildings of these businesses were still standing, and appeared to be functioning



*Russisch-Amerikanische Muellerei Gesellschaft the mill operated by Wilhelm Isaak Dyck*



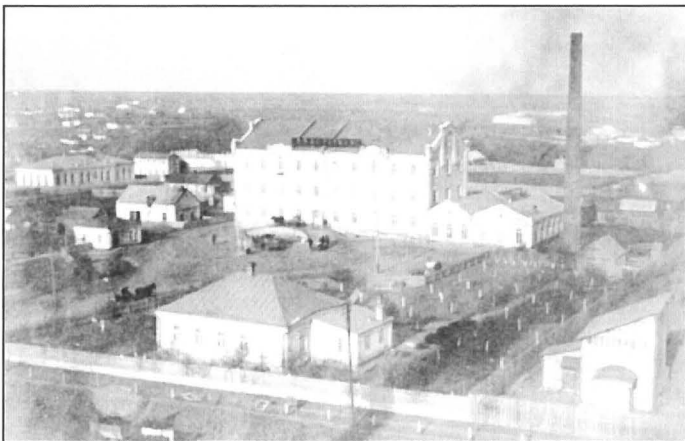
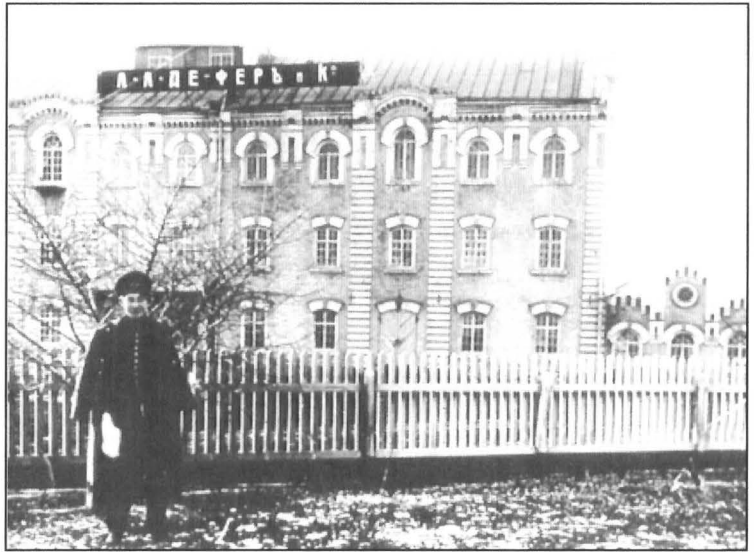
The mill of the *Donischen Gesellschaft* in 1903



Paint and Chemical Factory of Jakob Isaak, Millerovo

## A A DeFehr and Sons flour mill

Mill with son Heinrich  
in foreground



Residence of A A DeFehr (Jr)  
with mill and MB Church  
in the background

The mill in 1998

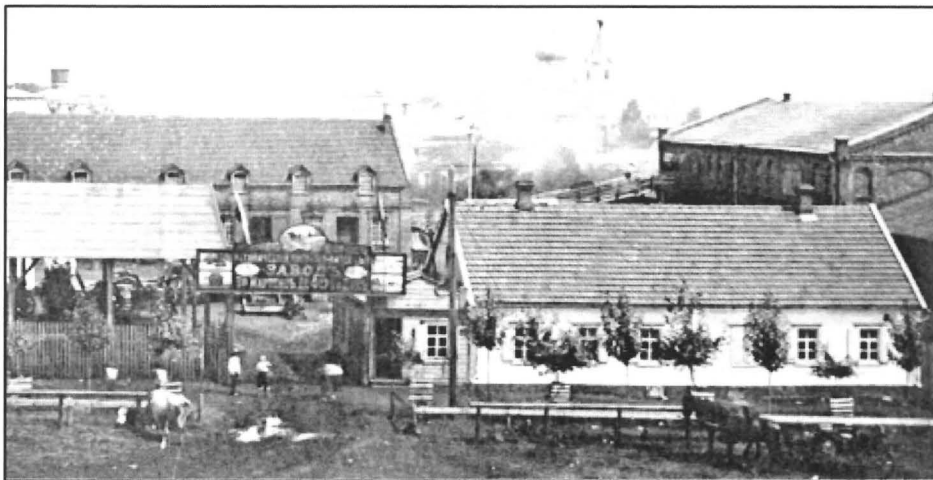




## Martens, DeFehr and Dyck Implement Factory

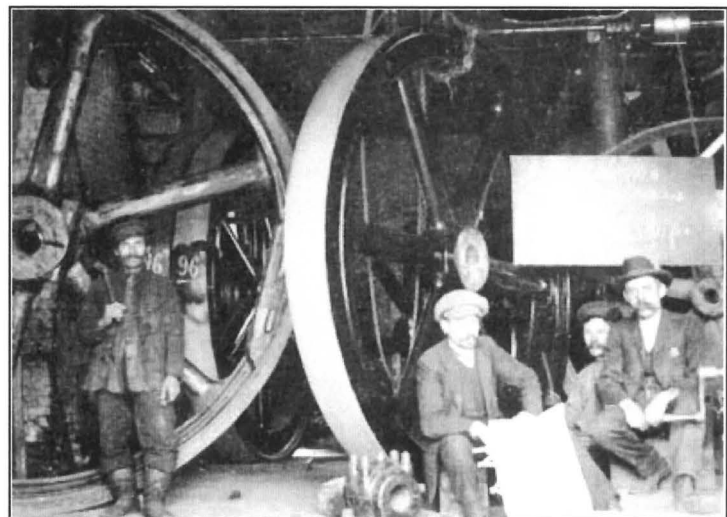


Letterhead



Factory exterior  
view

Factory interior view  
Chief engineer Johann Rempel  
in foreground with blueprints



## Martens, DeFehr and Dyck Implement Factory in 2005



Worker housing for the Russian employees of the factory



Old oil presses still on the factory yard. Kornelius Martens won two gold medals for these inventions at an exhibition



Monument to celebrate the centenary of the establishment of the factory, erected in 2004

Martens, DeFehr and Dyck Implement Factory in 2005



Factory in 2005, with manager Vladimir Kovalenko  
(first on the right)



The factory yard in 2005

## WILHELM ISAAC DYCK (1854 - 1936)

Wilhelm Isaak Dyck was born on 4 February 1854 in Rosenthal in the Chortitza Colony. His parents were Isaak Heinrich Dyck and Maria David Redekopp. His great-grandfather Heinrich Dyck, with his family, had migrated from near Danzig to Kronsgarten, a village 80 km north of the Chortitza Colony, in 1789. Nothing further is known about his mother's family. Parents Isaak and Maria were married on 4 December 1841. They had six children:

1. David - born 20 November 1842, died 2 December 1842
2. Katharina - born 4 January 1844, died 1 February 1844
3. Heinrich - born 19 February 1845, died 8 February 1861
4. Katharina - born 23 July 1848, died 6 March 1870
5. David - born 23 October 1851 in Rosenthal, died 7 June 1927
6. Wilhelm - born 4 February 1854 in Rosenthal, Chortitza Colony

Wilhelm's mother died, likely about six months after his birth. Father Isaak married Elisabeth Krahn 12 January 1856, and the couple had another son, Isaak, born 13 April 1857. Wilhelm's father Isaak died on 10 April 1857, so at the age of three the young Wilhelm was an orphan. Despite there being a stepmother, the children were distributed into various homes. Elisabeth married Gerhard Heinrich Rempel 18 September 1857, a scant four months after husband Isaak Dyck died.

Wilhelm was first taken into the home of some relatives, but then later was transferred into a foster home, that of Gerhard Krahn in Neuenburg. Here the young lad was employed as a swineherd; food was scant. In summer he slept on straw stacks behind the barn, and despite being terrified of thunderstorms was not allowed to sleep in the house. The mother of the house and a daughter tried to be kind to him, but Wilhelm often received severe beatings from Gerhard Krahn for little or no cause. His older sister Katharina visited him on one occasion, and finding that he had not been able to sit down for two weeks because of bruises to his back, reported his condition to the authorities. Wilhelm was transferred from this foster home, probably to the village of Franzfeld, where he seems to have stayed in a number of homes.



Wilhelm Isaak Dyck

Wilhelm went to the local *Dorfschule*, likely in Franzfeld, and did very well. He came to the attention of Abram Wieler, a teacher who took a personal interest in his welfare; he first taught Wilhelm about salvation through Jesus Christ, and taught him to pray. Upon completion of his studies at the *Dorfschule*, Wilhelm was sent to the *Zentralschule* in Chortitza, where he lived in a dormitory. He was sponsored by the municipality, and as such had poor clothing and little food, since he was basically on his own. He did very well as a student, and upon graduation was appointed as assistant secretary (administrator) of the Chortitza Volost. Once he was earning a salary Wilhelm made sure that he repaid the municipality every kopec that had been spent on his behalf. In 1874,

at the age of 20, he was appointed as chief administrator of the Nikolaipol (Yazykovo) Volost. Despite having had a difficult childhood Wilhelm was a lively and happy person. He learned to play the violin, and frequently attended dance parties, both to fiddle and to dance; he also wrote poetry.

On 7 July 1877 Wilhelm married Maria Riediger, whom he had met in Chortitza. Maria had taught school in Kiev for one year, then at the age of nineteen married. She was the granddaughter of Heinrich Heese, a Lutheran who had emigrated from Prussia in 1818 and spent years as colony administrator and educator in both the Molotschna and Chortitza Colonies. His daughter Elisabeth, Maria's mother, married Martin Abram Riediger of Lichtfelde. Maria was born to this couple on 1 July 1858 in Neuanlage; she was apparently one of the first lady teachers to graduate in Chortitza.

The couple first lived in Nikolaifeld, where their first seven children were born. Wilhelm continued his work as colony administrator. Tragedy struck the young family, their first four children dying at early ages. Three died within two and a half weeks in late 1883 and early 1884 as a result of a diphtheria epidemic. Children born to Wilhelm and Maria were:

1. Elisabeth - born 6 October 1878 in Nikolaifeld, died 10 January 1884
2. Maria - born 14 November 1879 in Nikolaifeld, died 27 December 1883
3. Helena - born 14 January 1881 in Nikolaifeld, died the same day
4. Katharina - born 23 December 1881 in Nikolaifeld, died 23 December 1883
5. Maria - born 16 May 1884 in Nikolaifeld, married Kornelius Jakob Martens in 1902, had 7 children, 3 dying in infancy, Kornelius was a partner in an implement factory in Millerovo, he evangelized Russians and founded a Russian Baptist Church in Millerovo, Kornelius escaped Russia in 1927, Maria imprisoned for mission work, eventually Kornelius was able to get Maria to Germany in 1936, immigrated to Canada, Maria died in Winnipeg 1 July 1961, Kornelius died 17 June 1974 (see also biography of Kornelius Jakob Martens)
6. Elisabeth - born 28 August 1885 in Nikolaifeld, married Cornelius Abram DeFehr in 1903, had 6 children of whom 4 became adults, Cornelius was a partner in an implement factory in Millerovo, fled to the Kuban in 1919, immigrated to Canada in 1925, Cornelius had a successful importing business in Winnipeg, he was very involved in the MB Conference, both he and Elisabeth played a part in Mennonite migration to Paraguay after World War II, Elisabeth died in Winnipeg 12 September 1976, Cornelius died 11 February 1979 in Winnipeg (see also biography of C A DeFehr)
7. Katharina - born 24 December 1886 in Nikolaifeld, married David Johann Klassen in 1905, had 10 children of whom 5 died in infancy, David was a teacher, moved to Kantemirovka in 1909, likely to start his own flour mill, served in *Forstei* after 1914, fled to Kuban in 1919 with extended Dyck family, immigrated to Canada in 1924, to Hepburn, then Coaldale in 1927, then Yarrow, BC in 1941, Katharina died in Yarrow, BC in 1984
8. Anna - born 24 March 1889 in Reinfeld, disabled, died 13 August 1922 in the Kuban
9. Helena - born 20 April 1891 in Reinfeld, married Jacob Peter Riediger 23 August 1909, he was an engineer working for the mill owned by his father-in-law, had 7 children of whom 1 died at an early age, immigrated to Canada in 1924, arriving in Hepburn, then to Gnadenthal, Manitoba, but then soon to Morden, where Jacob first worked

- in, then owned a mill. Helena died 26 September 1966 in Morden, Manitoba
10. Susanna - born 7 February 1893 in Reinfeld, married Wilhelm Dyck, a cousin, in 1915, had 7 children, 5 growing to adulthood, stayed in Russia, and died in Russia 13 August 1984
  11. Wilhelm (Willy) - born 28 February 1895 in Andreasfeld, died at the age of 3 in Andreasfeld, 6 September 1898

During the time in Nikolaifeld both Wilhelm and Maria had conversion experiences sometime around 1878. This meant a considerable change in lifestyle for the couple. They were baptized and joined the Mennonite Brethren Church. Wilhelm immediately started his work in the Kingdom of God. One of the daughters later wondered if the family deaths may have driven them to an even more profound faith in 1883 or 1884.



Wilhelm and Maria (nee Riediger) Dyck

In 1889 the family tried to immigrate to America, but because of an outbreak of cholera in Latvia the "border was closed." Wilhelm had already resigned from his job in Nikolaifeld and sold his properties, so they moved to Reinfeld. For his work as administrator of the volost Wilhelm received a medal from the Czar. The Dyck family continued to apply for immigration.

In Reinfeld Wilhelm was elected, and on 9 October 1892 ordained as a minister of the Mennonite Brethren Church. Elder Aron Lepp of Einlage presided, the ceremony taking place in the Nikolaipol church. From that time on his life was a steady, almost dizzying round of activities involving church and business ventures. One gets the distinct impression that Wilhelm did not shy away from adventure and travel in his various ministries.

Wilhelm almost immediately became an itinerant minister with travels taking him to Poland (together with Elder Jakob Janz of Friedensfeld) as well as Bulgaria in the west, to Samara, Orenburg and Siberia in the east. In March of 1894 Wilhelm and Jakob Reimer undertook a trip to Turkestan. Travelling by train, stage coach, over a mountain pass by sled and over the Caspian Sea by ship, they reached their destination, Aulie Ata, in 27 days. They ministered to the five small Mennonite villages from March 30 until May 3. They made house visits and held public meetings, having up to 400 people attend the Good Friday service. The return trip presumably also took almost a month. At the end of this long trek it was remarked that "The Lord richly blessed in the service of the Master."

When Wilhelm returned from Turkestan he decided to give up thought of emigration, settling down in Andreasfeld, a village near the Chortitza Colony. Here the family owned a house with two dessiatines of land. Wilhelm functioned as a minister of the nearby Einlage MB Church, but also continued to spend a considerable amount of time away from home on his itinerant ministry. His



wife then managed the household. In February of 1896 Wilhelm, this time with his wife, travelled to St Petersburg to make a presentation to the government regarding the nonresistant status of Mennonites in Russia. After consulting with various officials the delegation was finally able to take the petition directly to the President of the Governing Council, Konstantin Nikolayevitsch. The impression was that they had a favourable hearing, but Konstantin would have to study the document further before giving a definitive answer. Having achieved the best possible, the delegation returned home and asked the churches to pray for a satisfactory ruling.

Wife Maria unfortunately became ill later that year, and on 14 October 1896 died of typhus, at the young age of 38. Wilhelm was left with seven children.

Wilhelm married Emilie Poetker of Alexanderheim, Pavlograd, Ekaterinoslav on 19 July 1897. She was born 11 December 1874, so at 23 was considerably younger than her husband. Wilhelm knew the parents, Gerhard Poetker and Elisabeth Koop, and often stayed in their home on his travels. Emilie came to his particular attention when Wilhelm was in Alexanderheim to settle a church dispute. The couple had seven additional children:

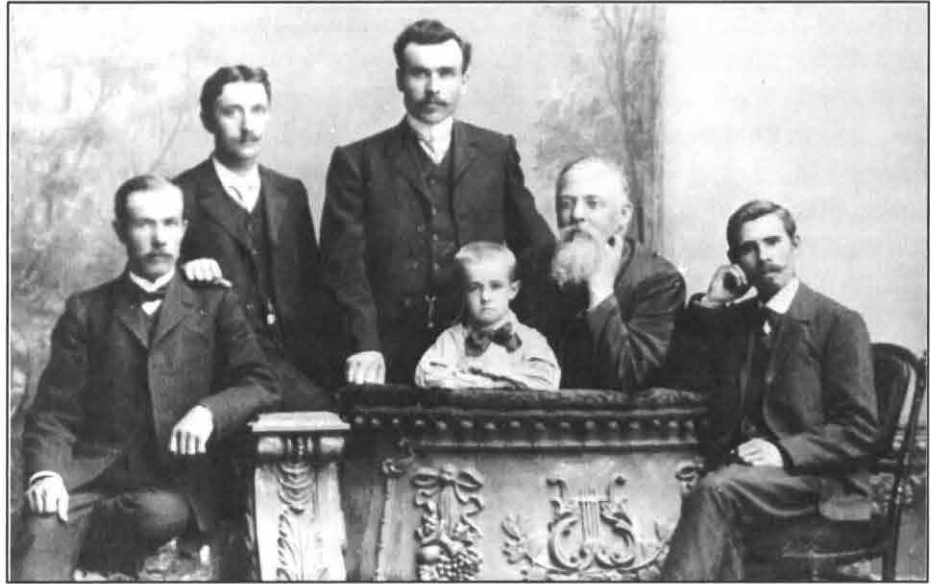
12. Emilie - born 16 March 1899 in Andreasfeld, died 5 October 1901 in Petrovka
13. Amalie - born 18 February 1901 in Petrovka, baptized in Millerovo, attended the *Maedchenschule* in Halbstadt, to the Kuban in 1919, immigrated to Canada in 1924, married Johannes Bock 23 October 1927 in Gnadenthal, Johannes taught in a number of southern Manitoba schools, they lived in Marquette, then Winnipeg, had 10 children, of whom 3 died in infancy, Amalie died 11 December 1988
14. Wilhelm - born 18 July 1903 in Millerovo, baptized in Millerovo 5 October 1917, to the Kuban in 1919, immigrated to Canada in 1924, married Anna Reimer 25 June 1927, lived in Gnadenthal, then Coaldale 1932 to 1934, thereafter Niverville, had 6 children, was pastor of the Niverville MB Church, for many years as lay minister, then as an ordained minister, successful businessman, he died 6 December 1971 in Niverville
15. Agathe - born 14 September 1905 in Millerovo, died 21 September 1906 in Millerovo
16. Agathe - born 8 June 1907 in Millerovo, to the Kuban in 1919, immigrated to Canada in 1924, worked, went to Manitoba Teachers College, taught school near Niverville 1930-1936, married Cornelius Cornelius Warkentin in 1936, lived in Winnipeg, had 6 children, adopted younger sister Elfrieda in 1943, died 13 October 2000.
17. Gerhard - born 26 November 1912 in Millerovo, died 2 October 1917 in Millerovo in a millstone accident
18. Elfrieda - born 2 January 1927 in Gnadenthal, Manitoba, lived with elder sister Agatha, adopted into the Warkentin family in 1943, married Cornelius Balzer in 1956, had 4 children, for years a missionary in Europe and Equador, now lives in Winnipeg (2006)

Always on the lookout for better business opportunities, but also concerned with the welfare of the church, the Dyck family moved to Petrovka, Naumenko Colony, in 1900. There Wilhelm, together with Wilhelm J Friesen, purchased a *Schlichtmuehle* (planer mill). Profit from this mill considerably improved the family finances. Then in 1903 came another move, when the Dycks and four other families became the first Mennonites to settle in Millerovo.

Wilhelm, together with Wilhelm J Friesen, Johann Nickel and J Siemens built a small flour



mill in Millerovo in 1903. This mill, called the "Don Mill," could produce 1,500 pud of wheat flour in 24 hours. Apparently Nickel and Siemens soon dropped out as partners, leaving Wilhelm and Friesen. In 1907 Wilhelm went to the United States to purchase milling equipment in Minneapolis. Using this imported machinery the *Russisch-Amerikanische Muellerei Gesellschaft* in 1908 constructed a second, much larger



Dyck family men l to r: David Klassen, Cornelius DeFehr, Jakob Riediger, Wilhelm I Dyck, Kornelius Martens and young Wilhelm

six-story steam-powered flour mill. Because much of the milling equipment was American, it was commonly referred to as the "American Mill." A two-story administration building was erected adjacent to the mill. This mill could produce 5,000 pud of wheat flour in 24 hours. Exact ownership



Wilhelm I Dyck with second wife Emilie and children Amalie, Agatha and Wilhelm and servant girl in Millerovo

of the milling company changed considerably from time to time, Wilhelm using the ownership and profits of the mill to help his children and other relatives. In 1916-17 the joint owners of the company were Wilhelm, David Dyck (brother), Jakob Riediger (son-in-law), Peter Riediger, Gerhard Poetker (father-in-law), Paul Poetker (wife's brother), another David Dyck and of course his long-standing friend and partner, Wilhelm J Friesen. After the Communist takeover the mill was expropriated by the government and expanded.

Two sons-in-law of Wilhelm, Cornelius Jakob Martens and Cornelius Abram

DeFehr established an agricultural machinery factory in Millerovo in 1904. They produced mowers, seeding machines and threshing machines, then added hydraulic presses and cylindric mills to the production lines. The business did well, for example selling several hundred seeding machines in the third year of operation. In 1909 Wilhelm became a third partner in the business; his major contribution was likely financial. During World War I there was discrimination by the banks against the company because it was German-owned, but it was still asked to manufacture transmission systems for government factories. With the Communist takeover the extended Dyck family felt unsafe in Millerovo, and abandoned all their properties. Apparently the mill buildings and the adjoining machine factory at this time may be standing empty, although there is a large, very busy sunflower seed mill in the region.

Wilhelm was considered to be a sharp businessman, very honest and good to his employees. He encouraged people to move to Millerovo, both to build up the community, the church and his business. His brother David and family, father-in-law Gerhard Poetker, cousins and friends were enticed to join him. He apparently gave everyone good jobs and shared his profits.

With a strong Mennonite Brethren contingent moving to Millerovo, especially from the Einlage region, a congregation was soon established with Wilhelm as leader. At first the group met in a small building, which was replaced by a beautiful new sanctuary in 1906. Wilhelm worked hard at the local church level, but also continued his itinerant ministry in many parts of Russia. It was said that his travels had included almost every country in Europe.

The church grew steadily, with Wilhelm representing the congregation at various conventions and meetings. He was one of the secretaries of the Mennonite Brethren convention held in Reinfeld 4-6 May 1904, as well as conventions held in Rueckenau in 1917 and Vassilievka in 1918. He was known to be a diplomat in dealing with government agencies, so the convention of 1910 held in Tiege, Sagradovka, asked Wilhelm and two others to appeal to the government for permission to implement practical Bible courses. At the same convention he was appointed conference statistician. At the 1917 Rueckenau convention he was elected to the Foreign Missions Committee, a position he held for a number of years.

Wilhelm chaired a meeting "of all conference leaders" held in Tiegenhagen in April of 1917 where many important issues were discussed, and the decision was made to have such discussions annually. Presumably following through on this decision a meeting was called for 7 October 1919 to be held in Rudnerweide. Only six representatives from outside of the Molotschna could attend, two of these being Wilhelm and Abram Rempel representing the Millerovo congregation. Even though restricted in their scope, the meetings were open and frank in discussing the problems, with special emphasis on the concept of nonresistance. It was reported that 160 Mennonites had lost their lives through shooting or murder in the last year. Business at the conference was rapidly concluded on October 9, including the payment by Wilhelm, treasurer of the MB Missions Committee, of 1,000 rubles to itinerant minister Hermann Neufeld for his work. The delegates headed for home at 11:30 that morning with the sound of cannons of the advancing Makhno army echoing in their ears.

What was likely the final Mennonite Brethren convention in Russia was held in Memrik in 1922. Wilhelm chaired the meetings with Abraham Heinrich Unruh assisting and recording the proceedings. The 24 representatives accomplished little, since the future of the church seemed to be so uncertain.

While Wilhelm travelled the country and world for the greater good of the Kingdom of God,



Wilhelm I Dyck residence in 1918  
Probably Wilhelm on the roof, with family

he was also appreciated by his own congregation. The Mennonite Brethren held their annual convention in Millerovo on 9-10 May 1914, followed by the ordination of Wilhelm as elder on Sunday, May 11. Proceedings started with session of prayer led by Wilhelm. This was followed with ordination orations by Elders Gerhard

Regehr of Reinfeld and Kornelius Fehr of Orenburg. Wilhelm and Emilie kneeled, the congregation rose, and the Elders fulfilled the ordination by the laying on of hands. At the congregation's request this was followed by a "brief" sermon by Wilhelm. After the noon break missionary Johann Wiens told a story for the children, a collection was held, and two more elders delivered sermons. So as not to slight any of the participants, most of the 40 ministers and elders present were asked for a few words, not to exceed ten minutes each. Despite protests that this was barely enough time for an introduction, this proposal was adhered to. Elder Wilhelm Dyck closed the proceedings, anticipating responsibility, but also blessings. The festivities were completed by the singing of "Now Thank We All Our God."

But even while the ordination celebration was proceeding the world was changing. World War I had started following the assassination of Archduke Francis Ferdinand of Austria on 23 June 1914. With various threats and counter-threats, by July Germany and Russia found themselves at war. Mennonite young men were called to alternate service; Wilhelm's son-in-law David Klassen was in the *Forstei*, son-in-law Jakob Riediger in the *Sanitaetsdienst*, working on a hospital train. There was anti-German sentiment in the country, and even some laws to confiscate "German" property. Banks would not lend money to German-owned business operations, so the implement factory owned by Wilhelm and his sons-in-law was refused a loan. To show concern for their "fatherland" the business community of Millerovo converted the second floor of the Dyck mill administration building into a 20-bed hospital for wounded soldiers, managed by Elisabeth DeFehr, wife of Cornelius A DeFehr and Wilhelm Dyck's daughter. Other aspects of life went on. Wilhelm continued to lead the church, to preach and to participate in MB conferences.

Being involved with the church, but also having the resources of his business to fall back on, Wilhelm had many opportunities to help people. He, for example, financed the *Zentralschule* education of Johann and Wilhelm Martens of Sergejevka; Wilhelm Martens worked in the mill as bookkeeper to pay off the debt, likely from 1914 to 1916. The story is also told that Wilhelm gave

cows to many widows and delivered sacks of flour to families in need.

There was a time of peace for the region after the Treaty of Brest-Litovsk, which pulled Russia out of World War I on 3 March 1918. One of the conditions of the treaty was that the German and Austrian armies occupy Ukraine. During this time a German soldier, Karl Ritter, was billeted with the Dyck family. He seems to have become a friend of the family. During this time Wilhelm sold their large mill for one million four hundred thousand rubles. The smaller mill was then working "day and night." One of the major investors, Wilhelm Friesen and his wife were contemplating leaving for Germany.

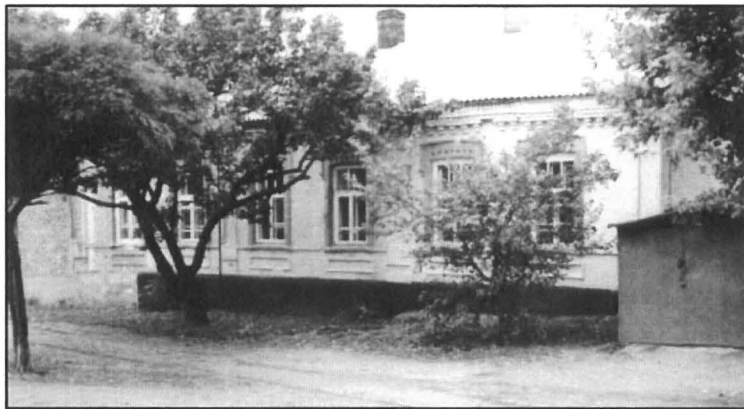
After the German troops left the region, likely November 1918, and the full effects of the Communist Revolution and the subsequent Civil War were felt, the wealthy and successful were targeted to be victims. During one time when the Communists were in control in Millerovo, Wilhelm was roughly picked up one night, imprisoned, and apparently slated for execution. Early the next morning Emilie walked to the headquarters, sneaked past the sleeping guards, and confronted the officer in charge. If she would bring him 70,000 (some say 100,000) rubles together with the signatures of 100 employees vouching that he had been good to them, her husband would be released. These demands were complied with, and Wilhelm was released. During another threatening encounter the Dycks fled through a grain field disguised as peasants. They knew their time was limited, and so decided to flee from the region.

At a time when the White Army was in control of the region Wilhelm arranged for eight freight train cars to be made available. A total of ten families, including the extended Dyck and DeFehr families as well as some employees, loaded whatever they could onto these cars, and on the very cold 7 December 1919, after nightfall, they were on their way. Travel took some time, but on December 19 they arrived at Bogoslavaya, railway station for the Kuban Colony, near the village of Wohldemfuerst (Velikoknyaschesk) in the Caucasus region. They had with them the cash from the sale of the mill. They also left 30,000 rubles in Millerovo to pay the factory workers. Unfortunately devaluation of the currency soon made their money almost worthless. Things were peaceful for the first year, but when the Communist control extended to include the whole Caucasus, conditions were less settled. During this time Wilhelm continued his ministry; he even travelled to the Memrik Colony to chair the Mennonite Brethren convention in 1922. Both he and Emilie visited Alexanderkrone in the Molotschna in September of 1923.

Recognizing, however, that there was no future for the family in Russia, arrangements were



Karl Ritter



Wilhelm Isaak Dyck home in 1998



made for immigration to Canada. Wilhelm, wife Emilie, children David and Katharina Klassen and family, Jakob and Helena Riediger and family, Amalie, Wilhelm and Agatha left in 1924, first arriving in Hepburn, Saskatchewan.

In 1925 Wilhelm purchased a farm in Gnadenthal, Manitoba. Here he both farmed and continued his ministry, including the itinerant travelling. Wilhelm, for example, spoke at a missions conference held in North Dakota in 1925. He went on a five-and-a-half week tour of western Manitoba and Saskatchewan in the spring of 1930. He tended to visit the areas where families lived in rather isolated circumstances; in Oxbow, Saskatchewan, for instance, he held a series of meetings and discussions for the three families in the area. He made at least 54 visits to individual homes during this trip.

It was at Gnadenthal that on 2 January 1927 the family received the “unexpected gift” of a daughter, Elfrieda. Later that same year son Wilhelm (called William in Canada) married Anna Reimer and daughter Amalie married Johannes Bock. In time it became apparent that the parent Dycks could no longer manage, both because of their age and the poor crops on the farm, so in 1930 they moved to live with daughter Agatha, who was a teacher in the Arran school near Niverville.

Mother Emilie had become ill in 1929, suffering from cancer of the breast. She was in considerable pain, and was bedridden for months. Surrounded by her family she quietly remarked, “I see light, bright light! Beautiful home!” On 11 December 1931 she quietly passed away. The funeral held in Niverville on December 13, had widespread participation.

Son William, wife Anna and family moved to Coaldale, Alberta in 1932. At the request of father Wilhelm they relocated to Niverville in 1934; Wilhelm so much wanted to die in the arms of his only son. When William moved back he rented an old farm house; father Wilhelm, Agatha and Elfrieda moved in with the family.

In 1935 Wilhelm longed to participate in just one more Mennonite Brethren conference to meet friends and fellow ministers, which he then did. He is registered as being a delegate to the Northern District convention held in Main Centre, Saskatchewan 7-10 July 1935. Upon returning he was quite ill, and spent four months in bed in the home of his children in Winnipeg, the Cornelius A DeFehrs. When he felt somewhat better he returned to Niverville. Here he passed away at 2:50 AM on Monday 2 March 1936. The funeral was held in Niverville on March 5, and despite it being a bitterly cold day, the building was filled to capacity. Because of the large number of friends the deceased had in Winnipeg, a memorial service was held in the North End MB Church on March 15, again with widespread participation.

The words of his son-in-law Kornelius Jakob Martens could well summarize a long active life well lived: “His life was a blessing to many. He led many a soul to the Saviour. Others were consoled and put on the right path. He loved righteousness and did not shy away from insisting on the truth, even if it was costly. He also understood when to use words of love...in his life he was an experienced teacher to me and a faithful advisor. He was a master at this.”

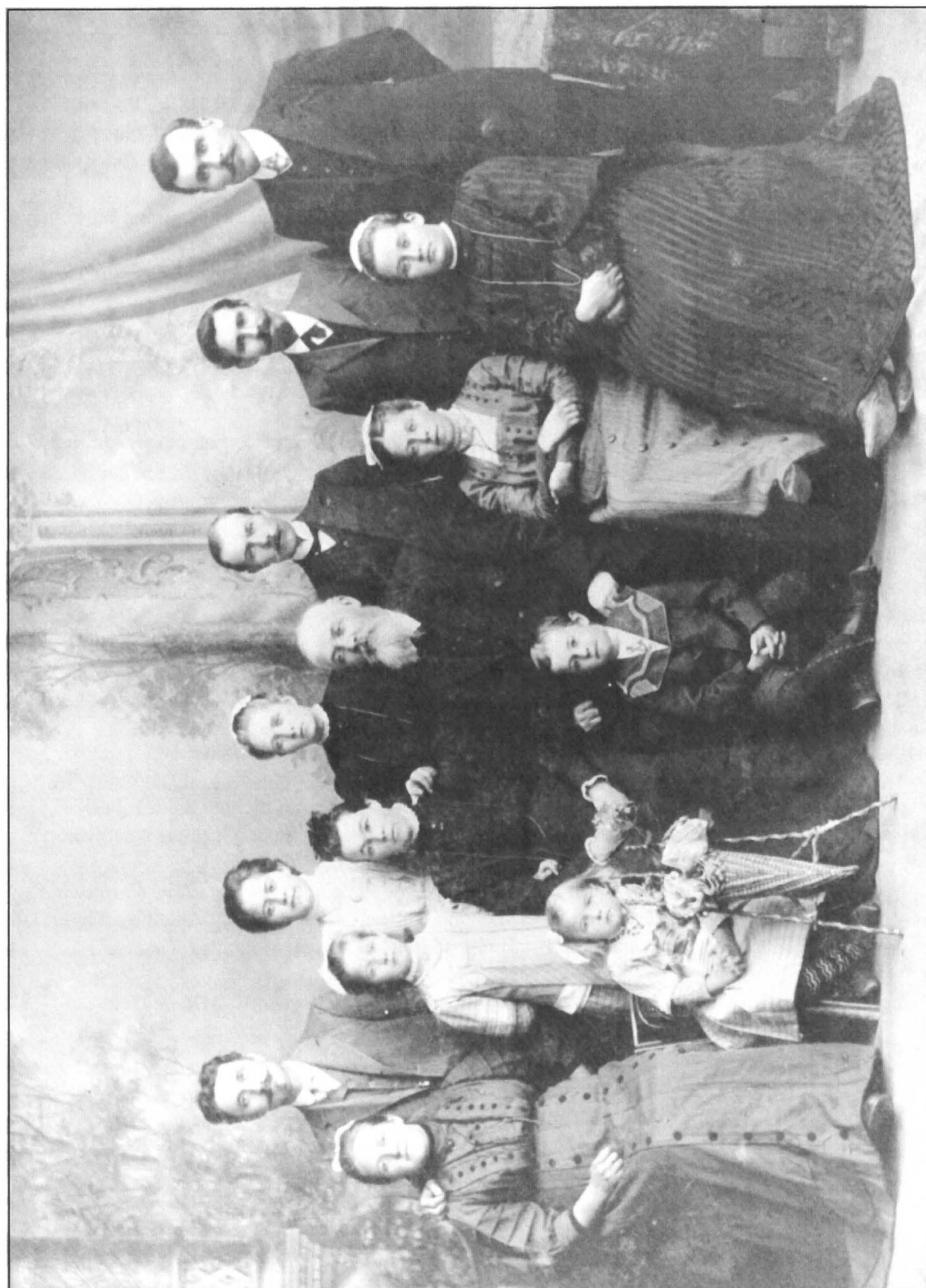
#### Sources:

Balzer, Elfrieda, daughter of Wilhelm Isaak Dyck, family information

Bergen, Heinrich, *Chortitza Colony Atlas, Altkolonie*, Mennonite Historical Society of Saskatchewan, Saskatoon, Saskatchewan, Canada, 2004, pp 75-77

DeFehr, C A, *Memories Of My Life*, printed for C A DeFehr by D W Friesen, Altona, Manitoba,

- 1967, many pages
- Dueck, Abe J, *Moving Beyond Secession*, Kindred Productions, Winnipeg, Manitoba and Hillsboro, Kansas, 1997, pp 12, 16, 58, 66, 72, 73, 75, 81, 83, 87, 93, 94, 96, 97, 100, 101, 132, 142
- Dyck, Maria, Report of the Delegation Trip to St Petersburg, February and March, 1896
- Friesen, P M, *Die Alt-Evangelische Mennoniten Bruderschaft in Russland (1789-1910)*, Raduga, Halbstadt, Taurida, 1911, pp 450, 464, 478
- Friesen, Rudy, with Friesen, Edith Elisabeth, *Building on the Past*, Raduga Publications, Winnipeg, Canada, 2004, pp 699-705
- Lohrenz, Gerhard, *Heritage Remembered*, CMBC Publications, Winnipeg, Canada, 1974, p 51
- Martens-Poetker Dokument, pp 2-10
- Mennonite Encyclopedia*, Vol II, pp 116, 686
- Mennonitische Rundschau*
- Obituaries:
- Dyck, Emilie (nee Poetker), 13 January 1932, p 10
- Letter to the editor about Emilie Dyck written by Franz Adam, 10 February 1932, p 5
- Dyck, Wilhelm Isaak, 11 March 1936, pp 1-3; 18 March 1936, pp 1-2
- Notes of appreciation
- Neufeld, Hermann, editor of the *Mennonitische Rundschau*, 18 March 1936, p 2
- Epp J; Regehr Gerhard P, 18 March 1936, pp 2-3
- Martens Kornelius Jakob, son-in-law, written from Mannheim, Germany, 6 May 1936, p 6
- Refugee Lists: 11 February 1925, p 20; 4 March 1925 Beilage, p 20
- Reports:
- Memorial service in honour of Wilhelm Isaak Dyck held in the North End MB Church 25 March 1936, pp 6, 7
- Report of Wilhelm Isaak Dyck's trip to Turkestan, taken from his own diary: 17 April 1968, p 14; 24 April 1968, p 14; 1 May 1968, p 14; 8 May 1969, p 14; 15 May 1968, p 14; 22 May 1968, p 14; report does not include the trip back
- Mennonitisches Lexikon*, Erster Band, p 21. Alexanderheim was a village of renters established in 1889. Its church was an affiliate of the Einlage MB Church
- Neufeld, Elder Hermann A and Katharina, *Their Story, The Autobiography of Elder Hermann A. Neufeld and Katharina Neufeld, in Russia and Canada*, translated and edited by Abram H Neufeld, Centre for Mennonite Brethren Studies in Canada, Winnipeg, Canada, 1984, pp 69, 78, 102
- Northern District Conference of the Mennonite Brethren Church Yearbook*, held in Main Centre, Saskatchewan 7-10 July 1935
- Poetker, Paul G, *The Poetker Journal*, Edmonton, Alberta, Canada, pp 20-24
- Schroeder, William and Huebert, Helmut T, *Mennonite Historical Atlas*, Springfield Publishers, Winnipeg, Canada, Second Edition, 1990, pp 19, 21, 50, 58
- Wieler, Elizabeth (Betty), granddaughter of Wilhelm Isaak Dyck, family information
- Wilhelm Dyck Clan, a family history written by members of the family, 1990, many pages
- Zionsbote*
- Report: The Itinerant ministry of Wilhelm Dyck, 2 April 1930, pp 7-8



Back row l to r: Cornelius DeFehr, Susanna Dyck, Katharina and David Klassen, Kornelius Martens, Jakob Riediger  
 Front l to r: Elisabeth DeFehr, Amalie, Emilie (mother), Wilhelm (father), Maria Martens, Helena Riediger  
 Agathe  
 Wilhelm



**CORNELIUS ABRAM DEFEHR**  
(1881-1979)

Cornelius Abram DeFehr was born 6 October 1881 in Einlage, Chortitza Colony. His parents were Abram Abram DeFehr and Helena Peters. His great-grandfather, Kornelius Benjamin DeFehr



Cornelius Abram DeFehr

had migrated from Heubuden, near Marienburg in West Prussia, with his parents Benjamin and Anna DeFehr, at the age of 12, first settling in Neuendorf in 1790. The DeFehr family seems to have resettled in Nieder-Chortitza, then moved to Einlage sometime before 1848, since father Abram was born there in 1848. Abram and Helena were married in 1872, and first lived in Einlage, then moved to Kronsweide in 1883, to the village in which Helena had been born 3 May 1849. They were able to buy a small farm near Helena's family. In Kronsweide Abram pursued two vocations: farming, of course, but also carpentry, particularly making furniture and building wagons, although he also ventured into constructing houses and windmills. Abram and Helena moved from Kronsweide to Petrovka in 1888, and lived there until 1906 or 1907, when they then moved to Millerovo. There Abram continued use of his skills as carpenter building a large steam-powered flour mill, which employed some of his children. In December of 1919 they, together with Cornelius and Elisabeth DeFehr and others, fled to the Kuban. There Abram died 9 November 1923. Mother Helena immigrated to Mexico with some

of her children in 1924, then eventually reached Canada in 1926. For the last year of her life she stayed with her daughter, Maria Peters, in Didsbury, Alberta, where she died 1 June 1931.

Abram and Helena DeFehr had 12 children:

1. Susanna - born 29 August 1874 in Einlage, died 13 October 1874 in Einlage
2. Helena - born 10 December 1875 in Einlage, married widower Franz Janzen who had 4 daughters in 1900, moved to Millerovo 1905, with parents A A DeFehr and brother Abram built a large mill, Franz died, then she married Johann Penner in 1914, had 2 sons, immigrated to Canada in 1925, to Laird, then Mullinger, Saskatchewan, to Gem and then nursing home in Coaldale, died 29 August 1970 in Medicine Hat
3. Susanna - born 15 September 1877 in Einlage, died 15 January 1905 in Petrovka after a 3½ month illness
4. Abram - born 12 October 1879 in Einlage, married Helena Paetkau 1906, lived in Millerovo, 9 children, 5 into adulthood, fled to the Kuban 1919, immigrated to Mexico in 1924, then to Canada, lived in Winnipeg, St Catharines and British Columbia, wife died 1960, married widow Katharina Janzen in 1962, he died 26 October 1966 in Clearbrook, British Columbia
5. Cornelius - born 6 October 1881 in Einlage, married Elisabeth Dyck 1903, 6 children, immigrated to Canada in 1925, died 11 February 1979 in Winnipeg, Manitoba
6. Katharina - born 13 September 1883 in Kronsweide, married Jakob Klassen 1912, 6 children, fled to Kuban in 1919, immigrated to Mexico in 1924, then to Canada in

- 1926, first lived in Winnipeg 15 years, then moved to St Catharines, Jakob died 24 October 1948, Katharina died 12 March 1975 in St Catharines, Ontario
7. Franz - born 15 April 1885 in Kronsweide, worked in a bank in Millerovo, married Susanna Dyck, daughter named Susanna, died in exile 1942
  8. Maria - born 16 February 1887 in Kronsweide, married David Peters 1909, 6 children, immigrated to Canada in 1923, first lived in Didsbury, Alberta, husband died 1947, moved to Matsqui, British Columbia in 1949, then to Calgary in 1973, died 9 February 1979 in Calgary, Alberta
  9. Jakob - born 26 March 1889 in Petrovka, died 10 April 1891 in Petrovka
  10. Margaretha - born 22 February 1891 in Petrovka, lived in Millerovo, likely fled to Kuban with parents in 1919, married Jakob Reimer in 1920, 5 children, stayed in Russia, died in Siberia
  11. Jakob - born 10 June 1893 in Petrovka, died 2 August 1893 in Petrovka
  12. Heinrich - born 15 May 1895 in Petrovka, served in the *Sanitaetsdienst*, fled to Kuban with his family in December 1919, immigrated to Mexico over Germany with his mother in 1924, then to Canada in 1926, married Anna Bergen 1927, 7 children, Anna died in 1947, married widow Sarah Kehler in 1948, 4 stepchildren, Heinrich died 8 September 1971 in Winnipeg, Manitoba

When Cornelius was two years of age the family moved from Einlage to Kronsweide. At an early age he took an interest in family life, particularly his father's workshop. He must have had a fairly "active" interest, since he recalled being spanked more than once for losing or breaking his father's tools. He took to heart the religious life of the family, being steeped in the Bible stories that he heard at an early age; also influencing his development were the prayers, sermons and hymns he heard in the church.

Seeking further economic opportunity the family in 1888 moved to Petrovka, a small village of the Naumenko Colony near the city of Barvenkovo. A larger farm, 180 dessiatines, was possible, and the soil in the region produced better yields. The religious life was quite active, the predominant church affiliation being Mennonite Brethren.

Schooling had hardly begun for Cornelius in Kronsweide; his teacher for the one year at that school was Johann Klassen. He then attended elementary school for two more years in Petrovka, M Thielmann and P Kroeker being his teachers. After that he went to a private school named Banteschovov for four years. A prosperous landowner named Bantesch built an elementary and high school for 200 students, underwriting the entire cost. In spring and autumn Cornelius walked the five verst to school, boarding at the school in wintertime. Principal Ivan Saddovski was an excellent teacher, later also author of an arithmetic textbook.

At the age of 19 Cornelius had a conversion experience. Jakob Reimer and A Wall were holding two weeks of Bible studies in Petrovka, having revival meetings in the evenings. Cornelius decided to skip the last evening meeting. Jakob Reimer also played "hookey" and instead held a special meeting for the youth of the village. All 12, ages 12-19, came to this extra meeting, and all 12 "decided to follow the Lord." This included Cornelius. He was then baptized and joined the Mennonite Brethren Church.

It was also in Petrovka that Cornelius met and fell in love with Elisabeth Dyck, daughter of Wilhelm Isaak Dyck. They both sang in the choir, and this became the social basis for their

courtship. The Dyck family moved to Millerovo in 1903, so for a time there was a separation. Cornelius followed Elisabeth to Millerovo, where they were married on 13 November 1903 in her parental home. Peter Toews was the presiding minister. The couple then returned to Petrovka, where Cornelius helped on his father's farm. His wages were the wheat produced on 10 dessiatines of land. After the birth of their first child Elisabeth (Liese) 11 October 1904 they moved to Millerovo, where Cornelius felt that they had a brighter future.

The six children born to Cornelius and Elisabeth were:

1. Elisabeth (Liese) - born 11 October 1904 in Petrovka, to Millerovo later that year, fled to the Kuban with the family in 1919, married Bernhard Bernhard Fast in the Kuban 23 March 1923, five children, the family immigrated to Canada with her parents in 1925, Bernhard was a teacher and minister, then also a partner in the DeFehr business beginning in 1938, while being the latest partner he still contributed considerably to the business, Bernhard died 22 December 1963 in Winnipeg, Elisabeth died 12 September 1976 in Winnipeg, Manitoba
2. Helena (Lenchen) - born 27 March 1906 in Millerovo, died July 1907 in Millerovo
3. Wilhelm - born 13 November 1907 in Millerovo, died 19 October 1910 in Millerovo
4. Abram - born 29 April 1909 in Millerovo, fled to the Kuban with the parents in 1919, immigrated to Canada with parents in 1925, married Velma Litz 6 September 1931, four children, partner in the DeFehr business in 1930, Velma died 7 July 1993 in Winnipeg, Abram is remarried and now lives in Kelowna, British Columbia (2005)
5. Cornelius - born 2 June 1911 in Millerovo, fled to the Kuban with the parents in 1919, immigrated to Canada with parents in 1925, married Agatha Neufeld 24 May 1936, three children, partner in the DeFehr business in 1933, Cornelius died 19 February 2000 in Winnipeg, Agatha lives in Winnipeg, Manitoba (2005)
6. Wilhelm - born 25 May 1913 in Millerovo, fled to the Kuban with parents in 1919, immigrated to Canada with parents in 1925, married Erna Neufeld 7 April 1940, four children, partner in DeFehr business in 1934, Wilhelm died 20 June 1987 at Victoria Beach, near Winnipeg, Erna died on 2 November 2003 in Winnipeg, Manitoba

Upon moving to Millerovo Cornelius became part of the Mennonite business group. Together with his brother-in-law Kornelius Martens, he opened up a workshop and implement dealership on a site where they also built a duplex dwelling. Five years later, in 1909, father-in-law Wilhelm I Dyck became a shareholder in a three-way partnership. The company, in time, was called "Implement Factory Martens, DeFehr and Dyck." Cornelius DeFehr was the general director, Kornelius Martens the production manager, with Wilhelm Dyck remaining the silent partner. Chief engineer and draftsman was Johann Rempel.

Business started on a small scale, initial total capital investment being 2,500 rubles. They were able to obtain a large loan of 20,000 rubles from a bank with which they purchased machines and equipment necessary for the manufacture of agricultural machinery. The second year of operation they sold 16 seeding machines, this ballooning to several hundred the next year. The production line soon expanded to include hydraulic oil presses and cylindric mills. At the end of a decade business volume reached about one million rubles, and they had 100-200 employees. The employees were treated well, receiving the usual expected benefits, as well as profit sharing.

The parents of Cornelius, Abram and Helena DeFehr, moved from Petrovka to Millerovo in

1906 or 1907. In 1907 Abram, together with son Abram, son-in-law Franz Janzen, and likely son-in-law Jakob Klassen and son Heinrich, built a large three-story steam-powered flour mill in Millerovo, named "A A DeFehr and Sons." By 1917 it seems that Cornelius also had a share in this business.

Things changed with the outbreak of World War I. Brother Abram was drafted into the alternate service, *Forsteidiienst*. Cornelius was not called up because the manufacturing firm had received several large orders from the Defence Ministry. He, as general manager of a business producing materials for the government, as well as all the workers in the factory, were exempted on this basis.

Also during the war the Mennonite businesses of Millerovo opened up a 20 bed hospital for wounded soldiers on the second floor of the administrative building of Wilhelm Dyck's mill. Elisabeth, wife of Cornelius DeFehr, was in charge of this unit.

With Russia being at war with Germany it is not surprising that there would be some resentment against "Germans" in the country. The local bank advised the factory that all German-speaking citizens were to be denied bank credits; the 200,000 rubles owed the bank were to be repaid rather quickly. In time these discriminatory measures were eased, but by then the factory did not need the loans. The factory was actually asked to produce transmission systems for the government as well as casings for hand grenades and land mines. Somewhat to the relief of the factory owners the last two orders were scrapped with the outbreak of the Russian Revolution.

During the war the Czarist government planned to confiscate all German-owned land and properties; in some regions this had already been carried out. With the downfall of the Czarist government this plan was also abandoned. In 1918, with the Civil War raging, the local leader of the Don Cossacks gave the order to mobilize all male persons in the area. Wanting to exempt his factory workers, Cornelius boarded the first express train to the district capital of Novocherkassk on 25 January 1919. He did receive a certificate in writing from the commander of the Cossack Army, but before he reached home the Red Army occupied Millerovo. During this time about 100 leading citizens were arrested, imprisoned, and many were shot. The Mennonite businessmen had been able to purchase their lives with huge sums of money; these included Cornelius's father-in-law, Wilhelm Dyck. The son of neighbour Jakob Isaak had tried to avoid paying the bribe, and had been shot.

When Cornelius got back after four months the family had been driven from their home, and lived in one small room of their relative's house, that of Jakob Riediger. When the Cossacks (White Army) regained control of the area, the business owners returned to their own homes. But it was an uneasy time. The extended Dyck family, including Cornelius and his family, arranged for freight cars to be made available. Ten families climbed in, together with whatever they could take along. After midnight on a cold 7 December 1919 the cars were locked, and they headed south for the Kuban region of the Caucasus. The DeFehrs had left everything except 30,000 rubles of cash in the



Elisabeth and Cornelius  
in their younger years



factory. Of course, they expected to return fairly soon. Of the DeFehr family Abram and Helena DeFehr (Sr), Abram and Helena DeFehr (Jr) and their children, Cornelius and Elisabeth DeFehr and their children, Jakob and Katharina Klassen and their children and Heinrich DeFehr (single) were on the train to the Kuban.

For Cornelius the situation was additionally complicated. He himself was suffering from typhus and lay in bed unconscious; wife Elisabeth had to make all the arrangements. The medical doctor of their factory was willing to accompany the family, at least part of the way, to monitor his condition.

The trip to the Kuban was a long, slow one, with the train cars often being shunted onto side tracks. When they reached Rostov, somewhat over one third of the way, the spell of the typhus fever Cornelius had suffered from seemed to break. They arrived at Bogoslavskaya, railway station for the Kuban Colony, on 19 December 1919. The reception by the Mennonites of the Kuban was friendly, Cornelius and his family first receiving accommodations with the Johann Kornelsen family in Velikoknyazheskoye (Wohldemfuerst). The first year the conditions were fairly settled, but then the Communist takeover penetrated even to the Kuban.

At one point Cornelius and Abram and their families were picking fruit which they had purchased from several farmers. A friend came and warned them that they were on the list to be transported to work in the coal mines in the Ural Mountains. Cornelius and Abram hid in a neighbouring corn field, then by wagon fled further south to the safer settlement of Suvorovka. Here their reception was again friendly, but in time the Communist regime extended its tentacles even to this remote area.

Cornelius heard that his brother Franz had been imprisoned after the Reds had moved into Millerovo. A fellow worker, Franz Neufeld, had accused him and a Russian of wrongdoing in the bank where they worked. Eventually, in part because of the goodwill of some of his former factory workers, Cornelius was able to free the two from prison.

When the whole Caucasus was overrun by the Communists Cornelius and his family returned to Velikoknyazheskoye. Together with his brother Heinrich he went into business milling flour. With the profit he built a vegetable oil refinery and later paid for the immigration expenses.

Cornelius was busy representing and helping the Mennonite population in the region. He played a part in the distribution of food by the American Mennonite Relief Agency during the famine of 1922. He represented youths in court when their nonresistant status was questioned. In his local Mennonite Brethren Church he was choir conductor for two years.

While residing in the Kuban a number of personal events happened in the family. On 7 June 1923 Bernhard Bernhard Fast, a teacher, married daughter Elisabeth in Velikoknyazheskoye. Later that year, 9 November 1923, father Abram DeFehr died.

Cornelius attended the General Conference of Mennonite Congregations in Russia held in Moscow 13-18 January 1925. His conclusion was that there was no future for him and his family in Russia, and that it would be wiser to leave the country. After they received their papers they sold their meagre belongings at an auction and left by train for Moscow. They made a brief stop in Millerovo, and against the advice of the manager Cornelius addressed his former employees at the factory. He later stated, "Departing from the factory and from Millerovo was a difficult moment for me." After some delay because of a possible eye infection, trachoma, Cornelius received medical attention and the problem was solved. Stopping briefly in Germany on the way, they eventually

crossed the ocean, landing in Quebec 11 September 1925.

Of the DeFehr extended family, David and Maria (nee DeFehr) Peters reached Canada first, settling in Saskatchewan in 1922. Abram and Helena DeFehr (Jr), Jakob and Katharina (nee DeFehr) Klassen, single brother Heinrich and mother Helena DeFehr managed to get to Mexico in 1924, then to Canada two years later, in 1926. Johann and Helena (nee DeFehr) Penner likely



C. A. DeFehr family in 1927

Back row l to r: Wilhelm, Cornelius (father), Abram, Bernhard Fast, Cornelius (son)  
Front l to r: Elisabeth (mother), Bernhard Fast (Jr), Elisabeth Fast (nee DeFehr)  
baby on Elisabeth's lap Elisabeth Fast (later Goossen)

immigrated in 1925.

Cornelius and his family went directly to Gnadenthal, Manitoba, where his father-in-law Wilhelm Isaak Dyck had purchased a farm. Three days after they arrived in southern Manitoba they took their children Abram and Cornelius as well as son-in-law Bernhard Fast the 16 miles to Gretna to register them at the Mennonite Collegiate Institute. Cornelius himself admitted that for at least five years he was still dreaming of returning to Russia, so he did not, for himself, emphasize the learning of English. He later came to regret this.

Cornelius very soon re-entered the world of business. He purchased a Model T Ford half-ton truck and took to the road. He sold cream separators and hardware, using the Heinrich Schuet "Hamburg Export and Import Company" to fill his orders. This was the same company that he had been dealing with while he was in business in Russia. Most sales were to German- or Russian-speaking businessmen, although as his English improved, the scope widened.

In the spring of 1926 Cornelius and family moved to Winnipeg. "Standard Importing and

Sales Company” began humbly in a 16 by 12 foot room at 159 Princess Street. Facilities were gradually enlarged and items sold expanded. The region covered included eastern and western Canada as well as the United States, although most of the orders came from the prairie provinces. The first five years Cornelius travelled the area himself, up to 7,000 miles in two months. He often slept in farmers’ homes or even in his own tent. Sales improved dramatically. In 1926 a volume of \$19,855.25 yielded only \$174.47 net profit. By 1929 sales were \$72,494.23. In time the sons joined the business on a full-time basis, Abram in 1930, Cornelius in 1933, Wilhelm in 1934 and son-in-law Bernhard Fast in 1938.

The economic disaster of the depression did not spare Cornelius and his business. The low point came in 1939 when total sales of \$33,461 left a net profit of only \$325. World War II of course made it impossible to trade with Germany and did not make sales of German goods very popular.



Catalogue 1966-7

This forced the “Canadianization” of the company, with sales of Swedish, but also many Canadian products. They sold cream separators, grain crushers, grain elevators, furnaces, oil burners, chick brooders, refrigerators, washing machines, garden tractors and a host of other items. With the post-war boom, business jumped dramatically. In 1945 total sales were \$266,172, and they increased in 1947 to \$931,835. Gilson products comprised 60% of sales in 1948, together with other Canadian products bringing the total for this country up to 75%. A branch office had been established in Edmonton in 1932; additional branches were begun in Regina and Saskatoon.

In 1963 Cornelius sold the business to his sons and their families, the ownership then decreasing from five to four shares. Each son and son-in-law, with this reorganization, had his own company, the overall umbrella company being called “C A DeFehr and Sons.” That same year, on 22 December 1963, Bernhard Fast died, so his second son, Cornelius Fast, took over the management of his part of the

company. The eldest Fast son, Bernhard, was a physician, an internal medicine specialist.

During this whole time, while the business was expanding, Cornelius continued his interest in church and society at large. He was an active member of the Mennonite Brethren Church, and played a significant role in the formation of many of the institutions which moulded the future of the denomination. He and Elisabeth were members of the North-End, later Elmwood MB Church; they were deacons of that congregation from 1949 onward. Cornelius was on the building committee when the North-End Church built a new sanctuary in Elmwood, even donating the land on which the new structure was erected; official dedication was on 7 February 1964.

Cornelius served on many church, conference and church-related boards: board member and treasurer of the MB City Mission Board (Winnipeg) 1930-1955; board member and treasurer of the Maria-Martha Home (Winnipeg) 1930-1956; founding member of the Concordia Hospital, on the board (1930-1935); member of the MCI board 1938-1952; member of the Canadian Mennonite Board of Colonization 1940-1960; member of the Mennonite Central Relief Committee 1940-1960,



treasurer 1949-1960; treasurer of the Canadian MB Conference 1944-1960; member of the MBCI board 1945-1958; chairman of the board of the Christian Press 1945-1960, honorary board member 1960-1966; member, then honorary board member of MBBC 1945-1966; member of the Mennonite Central Committee 1947-1964; member of the Canadian Mennonite Relief and Immigration Council 1960-1964. Cornelius was also a founding member of Mennonite Economic Development Associates (MEDA), which was initially formed to help development in South America. Going beyond his Mennonite roots, Cornelius was also a longtime member of the Gideons. This was an incredible array of activity. Cornelius really seemed to put his heart into the work. One gets the impression that on occasion the “treasurer” of the various agencies may have dipped into his own pocket to help balance the books.

Of particular interest to Cornelius was the welfare of Mennonite refugees at any time, but especially after World War II. In 1947 Dr P C Hiebert asked Cornelius, under the auspices of the Mennonite Central Committee, to be involved in the reception, settling and equipping of 2,030 refugees arriving in Paraguay on the *S S Volendam*. This eventually led to the founding of the Volendam Colony in East Paraguay. In this project Cornelius and Elisabeth worked together with Peter and Elfrieda Dyck. Originally sent on a five month assignment, the DeFehrs actually spent ten months in South America. The work of Cornelius also involved the settlements in the Chaco, Asuncion, Argentina and Brazil. He returned for additional assignments in Paraguay in 1948, 1952 and 1958.



Peter and Elfrieda Dyck with Elisabeth and Cornelius in Paraguay

In 1957 Cornelius agreed to accompany the executive secretary of the Mennonite Brethren Board of Foreign Missions, J B Toews, on an administrative trip around the world. They paid particular attention to the work in Japan, India, Germany and Austria. They left on May 29, and returned home after attending the Sixth Mennonite World Conference held in Karlsruhe, Germany August 8-15. Cornelius later reported to the mission board, remarking that only experienced and tested workers should be sent to the field, and that there should be direct accountability for work done. He felt that the entire missionary endeavor should be strongly supported.

Cornelius and Elisabeth celebrated their Silver Wedding Anniversary 13 November 1928 in a small mission church near the CPR railway yards in Winnipeg. Their Golden Wedding Anniversary was celebrated 13 February 1954 in the new Elmwood MB Church, just a few days after its official dedication. The Diamond Wedding Celebration of 16 November 1963 was attended by 52 family members and a host of friends, including I W Redekopp, pastor of the Elmwood church, J A Toews, president of MBBC, J J Thiessen, chairman of the Canadian Mennonite Relief and Immigration Council and George Sukkau, Canadian Conference treasurer and former associate in Paraguay. At the seventieth anniversary Elisabeth was already in a nursing home.

Wife Elisabeth had participated in many of the projects in which Cornelius was involved.



Cornelius and Elisabeth in later years

She was in charge of the hospital ward for wounded soldiers established by the Mennonite businessmen of Millerovo during World War I. She was assigned as deaconess dealing with women in the Kuban. She accompanied Cornelius on his strenuous trip to Paraguay in 1947, paying particular attention to refugee women without husbands. Elisabeth typed all of her husband's many reports, since she was the only one who could

read his writing. She was leader of the North-End/Elmwood Church women's group for 16 years. Her last days were spent in the Donwood Manor Nursing Home, where she died on 23 March 1972.

Daughter Elisabeth Fast died on 12 September 1976. The last years she had been disabled by Parkinson's disease, but still participated in many church activities.

Cornelius Abram DeFehr breathed his last on 11 February 1979 at 4 PM at the age of 97 years. His funeral was held on February 15 in the Elmwood MB Church. Minister Henry Brucks led the proceedings, using Proverbs 10:7 as text for the German sermon. Cornelius had been justified through faith, living a life in which the Holy Spirit was given opportunity to be active. Friend J B Toews in the English sermon emphasized the vision he had displayed and his ability to put the vision into action.

Editor Erich Ratzlaff of the *Mennonitische Rundschau* succinctly summarized the life of Cornelius: "He was not an academic nor a historian, but was an active participant in the developments of his time."

Both Cornelius and Elisabeth were buried in the Elmwood Cemetery.

#### Sources:

Bergen, Heinrich, *Chortitza Colony Atlas*, Mennonite Historical Society of Saskatchewan, Saskatoon, Canada, 2004, pp 39-42, 43-48, 68-69

Centenary Celebration of birth of Abram A DeFehr (Sr), celebrated at the North Kildonan MB Church in 1979

DeFehr, C A, *Memories of My Life*, printed for C A DeFehr by D W Friesen, Altona, Manitoba, 1967, many pages from vii to 231. A German version, *Erinnerungen aus meinem Leben*, was published in 1976. For this biography the English version has been used

DeFehr family information

Obituary of Cornelius Cornelius DeFehr by son William DeFehr

DeFehr, Sara Heinrich, *Im Wandel der Jahre*, printed by Regehr's Printing, Winnipeg, Canada, 1975, many pages

- Dueck, Abe J, *Concordia Hospital 1928-1978*, printed by Christian Press, Winnipeg, Canada, 1978, p 41
- Dueck, Abe, *Cornelius A and Elizabeth (Dyck) DeFehr: Combining Service and Business*, in *Profiles of Mennonite Faith*, No. 20, Summer of 2002
- Friesen, Rudy P with Edith Elisabeth Friesen, *Building on the Past*, Raduga Publications, Winnipeg, Canada, 2004, pp 99, 699-705
- Goossen, Elizabeth (Bettie) (nee Fast), granddaughter of C A DeFehr, family information *Mennonite Brethren Herald*
- Obituaries (listed in chronological order)
- DeFehr, Cornelius Abram, 2 March 1979, p 33
  - Peters, Maria (nee DeFehr), 16 May 1979, p 30
  - Maria died 2 days before her brother C A DeFehr
  - DeFehr, Cornelius C, 31 March 2000, p 28
- Mennonitische Rundschau*
- Obituaries (listed in chronological order)
- DeFehr, Helena (nee Peters), 1 July 1931, p 9
  - Klassen, Jakob, 22 and 29 December 1948, pp 6, 7
  - DeFehr, Helena (nee Paetkau), 10 May 1961, p 11
  - Fast, Bernhard Bernhard, 2 January 1964, pp 1, 4
  - DeFehr, Abram A, 23 November 1966, pp 1, 4
  - Penner, Helena (nee DeFehr), 23 September 1970, p 11
  - DeFehr, Heinrich Abram, 13 October 1971, pp 11, 12
  - DeFehr, Elisabeth (nee Dyck), 12 April 1972, p 11
  - Klassen, Katharina (nee DeFehr), 7 May 1975, pp 11,12
  - DeFehr, Cornelius Abram, 28 February 1979, pp 1, 4; 16 March 1979, pp 2, 3
  - DeFehr, Wilhelm Cornelius, 16 September 1987, pp 25, 26
  - DeFehr, Abram A (III), September 1998, pp 30, 31
- Refugee List
- Refugee List for Canada for 1922, David and Maria Peters, 13 December 1922, p 3
- Schroeder, William and Huebert, Helmut T, *Mennonite Historical Atlas*, Second Edition, Springfield Publishers, Winnipeg, Canada, 1996, pp 13, 21, 119
- Unruh, Benjamin Heinrich, *Die niederlaendisch-niederdeutschen Hintergruende der mennonitischen Ostwanderungen im 16., 18. und 19. Jahrhundert*, Im Selbstverlag, Karlsruhe, Germany, 1955, p 240

## KORNELIUS JAKOB MARTENS

(1876-1974)

## MARIA (nee DYCK) MARTENS

(1884-1961)



Kornelius Jakob Martens

Kornelius Jakob Martens was born 23 April 1876 in the Baratov Mennonite Colony in South Russia. His parents were Jakob Martens of Einlage, and Susanna Klassen of Neuendorf, both located in the Chortitza Colony. Kornelius was the oldest of eight children; there were also at least another four infants which did not survive, with some of the names being used again. Next to Kornelius were Susanna, Katharina (1881), Maria, Jakob, Johann (1889), Helena (1891) and Margaretha (1893). Jakob and Susanna were poor, and moved from place to place a number of times. For a time they lived on the estates of wealthy Heinrichs relatives. When Kornelius was eight years of age the family moved onto one of these estates. At the age of nine (the usual age was seven) he was enrolled in the school of a village about six kilometres from their home. His father put him on a horse, and away he went. Kornelius actually much preferred the open steppe to school, so the long ride

does not seem to have been a problem. When Kornelius was age 13 his parents obtained a 30 dessiatine farm in a newly established village. In the village he was known as a mischievous and undisciplined boy, often participating in, or even being the instigator of youthful "pranks."

Kornelius was converted at the age of 16. His spiritual development had been a gradual process. The first seed was sown with the religious instruction during his second year at school. He still continued his irresponsible behavior, even trying to prove to others that he could lead, but he himself knew better. He and a friend intended to beat up a boy in the village who was member of a *fromm* (devout) family, but this lad turned the tables on them by praying with them. One day he was to take a load of grain to a

nearby mill. On the way there Kornelius prayed all the prayers he could remember, then on the way back he broke through to the fact that his sins could be forgiven, and were forgiven. With this realization he stopped the horses, jumped off the wagon, and ran onto the open steppe, praising and thanking God. Then he had to go home to face his family and others in the community. His father was not happy, and some of his friends and cousins ridiculed him. When he went to the various village farms to apologize for his past acts of vandalism, he was even beaten on one occasion. But Kornelius persisted in living a Christian life; he was baptized by itinerant Minister Hermann



Maria (nee Dyck) Martens

Neufeld, and joined the Kronstadt Mennonite Brethren Church.

Kornelius spent some time learning the trade of machinist (*Eisendreher*) in New York of the Ignatyev Colony, working in the J G Niebuhr farm implement factory. From there he went to nearby Kharkov where he obtained a good position at the M Helfferich-Sadet Company, which manufactured farm implements. While in Kharkov he attended night classes at a technical school, probably the "Kharkov Alexander III Practical Technological Institute." It was the only higher technical education establishment in South Russia at the time. At no time is there mention of any *Zentralschule* education or extra religious training in the life of Kornelius.

On 6 June 1902 Kornelius married Maria, the fifth child of Wilhelm Isaak Dyck and his first wife Maria (nee Riediger). She was born 16 May 1884 in Nickolaifeld, Yasykovo Colony. The wedding was in Petrovka, the presiding minister being Jakob Wiebe. That same year Kornelius also received the "call" to become a minister, particularly to the surrounding Russian population. At one point he had been working at his machine in the factory, and came to the conclusion that he did not feel his primary calling in life was to turn metal, but to spread the gospel to the surrounding people. Kornelius began his ministry in 1902, being involved in the founding of a Russian Baptist church in Kharkov.

After two years the Martens family moved to Millerovo to take advantage of business opportunities in that city. Their first child had been born in Kharkov, the next six in Millerovo. Children born to Kornelius and Maria were:

1. Maria - born 23 August 1903 in Kharkov, she married Jakob Schulz, an engineer, in 1921, in the Kuban, had 5 children, eventually escaped from Russia to Germany in 1934, then to Canada after World War II, Jakob died 7 April 1966, Maria died 5 July 1995
2. Susanna (Suse) - born 30 August 1905 in Millerovo, married Johann Johann Unruh 29 May 1926 in Wohldemfuerst, Kuban Colony, immigrated to Canada in 1928, 5 children, Johann had insurance agency, Johann died 6 October 1982, Susanna died 13 June 1997
3. Elisabeth - born 19 October 1907 in Millerovo, died 11 November 1907 in Millerovo
4. Katharina - born 1 January 1909 in Millerovo, died 25 January 1909 in Millerovo
5. Helene (Lena) - born 13 March 1910 in Millerovo, married Peter Johann Unruh (brother of Johann Johann Unruh) 23 August 1928 in Wohldemfuerst, Kuban Colony, stayed in Russia, 2 children, banished to Murmansk and Siberia, their son Wilhelm was adopted by sister Maria Schulz, they later came to Germany, where Peter died 5 June 1979, Helene lived with daughter in Mannheim, Germany, she died



Kornelius Martens and Maria Dyck  
on their wedding day, 6 June 1902



10 October 1996

6. Wilhelm - born 24 December 1911 in Millerovo, escaped to Germany, then to Canada with his father in 1927, immigrated to Paraguay in 1938, he married Luise P Rahn on 7 January 1939 in Filadelfia, Paraguay, rancher and businessman in Paraguay, back to Canada in 1954, where he was a building contractor, 8 children born in Paraguay, one daughter in Canada, Wilhelm died 12 November 1990, Luise died 5 November 2004, both in Winnipeg
7. Kornelius - born 8 March 1915 in Millerovo, died 20 March 1915 in Millerovo



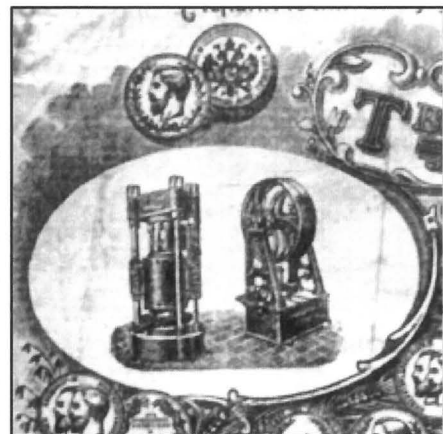
The Martens children, Maria standing, then l to r Helene, Wilhelm and Susanna

In 1904, together with brother-in-law Cornelius DeFehr, Kornelius Martens opened up a workshop and implement dealership on a site where they also built a duplex type of dwelling. The business was started on a small scale, initial total capital investment being 2,500 rubles. They were able to obtain a large loan of 20,000 rubles from the bank with which they purchased machines and equipment necessary for the manufacture of agricultural machinery. The second year of operation they sold 16 seeding machines, ballooning to several hundred the next year. Periodically they needed to enlarge the facilities as the production line expanded to include hydraulic presses and cylindric mills. Their foundry could process up to 1,000 pud (1 pud is 36.11 pounds or 16.38 kilograms) a day.

Despite increasing business the owners decided to adhere to some basic principles. They would not do business on the Sunday, regardless of how inconvenient this might be. They also set aside a small secret prayer room on the premises where they often sought the Lord in prayer, particularly in the difficult times.

Five years later, in 1909, father-in-law Wilhelm I Dyck became a shareholder in a three-way partnership. The company was called "Implement Factory Martens, DeFehr & Dyck." Cornelius DeFehr was the general manager, and ran the accounts, Kornelius Martens was the production manager, and played a role in the engineering and designs of products, with Wilhelm Dyck remaining the silent partner.

At an exhibition Kornelius Martens won two gold medals for designs of some of the machinery the factory produced, likely a gold medal for each of the machines depicted on the factory letterhead. There were contracts from within Russia, but also from abroad; in one six month period they produced 900 fly-wheels of various sizes for Daimler-Benz of Germany. According to the recollection of C A DeFehr, by the end of the decade the company business reached about one million rubles, and they had 100-120 employees. Kornelius Martens recalls there being 300-500 workers. A survey of "German" metalworking companies in



Part of the letterhead of factory "Martens, DeFehr and Dyck"

South Russia called the company “*Martens, Defehr & Dyck Gesellschaft, Eisengiesserei und mechanische Fabrik.*” They had a foundry, and built various machines (milling equipment, equipment for processing butter, and various agricultural implements). In 1912 they were recorded as having 200 employees, and in 1914 there were 120. In 1914 “*Jahres Produktion*” was 500,000 rubles. Apparently the employees were well paid, and after three years with the company could participate in a profit sharing plan.

As soon as the Martens moved to Millerovo, Kornelius started preaching to the Russians and the Cossacks in the region. After a few months a drunkard, a housewife and a brick-layer were converted and baptized. With this small start a Baptist church was begun in the region, which in time had up to 60 members, many being workers at the implement factory. The Orthodox Church strenuously opposed this new movement, some of the believers having to suffer for their belief, even spending time in jail. It should be recalled that the Orthodox Church had the full backing of the Czarist government, and that the price of leaving the Orthodox fold could be 3 years of banishment to Siberia. Kornelius was threatened with this possibility on a number of occasions. His business connections in high places, for example knowing the governor of the province, seem to have rescued him. Other religious groups such as Seventh Day Adventists and Pentecostals attempted to draw away members, although most in time returned to the Baptist group. Kornelius was elected leader of the Millerovo Baptist Church, and was also officially ordained as minister by the Baptist Church in nearby Rostov in 1918. Martens was not affiliated with the Mennonite Brethren Church in Millerovo, although on occasion they cooperated. When Baptist evangelist, Wilhelm Fetler, visited Millerovo, for example, the Mennonite Brethren church building was used for the meetings. In time the Baptist group had its own small sanctuary.

Kornelius must have been a charismatic, enthusiastic preacher, since he seemed to attract an audience wherever he went; he claims to have started many a church or group in the Don region (one reference says 20, another says 30 groups). Weather and distance were no obstacles. On occasion they had to chop holes in the ice of frozen ponds or streams to be able to baptize the believers. A story about one of the meetings is typical. Martens was accompanied by a group of five singers, travelling from village to village over the snow by sled. He recounted:

“One evening we came to a very humble hut. There was not much room, and there was a terrible stench, for two piglets and a calf shared the room with the people. The villagers were curious, and attracted by the singers came to see who would visit these poor people. The small room was soon full. Men, women and children sat on the floor and wooden benches, people on the outside looked through the windows. Old bearded men sat on top of the tile stove and curiously looked down, wondering what would happen. It was indeed a strange meeting. We sang as well as we could, and I read Ephesians Chapter 6. When I read “Take on...the Sword of the Spirit” one of the old men called down from the stove “Stop, stop, what is that, the Sword of the Spirit?” This question started an active discussion, and he and a number of others, including the village secretary, accepted Christ as their saviour.”

In this work his brother-in-law, Cornelius DeFehr, always was willing to help, allowing company horses and workers to be used to further the cause, although sometimes there was concern that the business trips took a little too long. On one occasion Kornelius preached at the dedication of a mill the company had built, using Matthew 7: 24-27 as text, presumably hoping that they had built on solid rock, not on sand, both in the spiritual and physical sense. He obviously travelled



widely both for the business and on evangelistic campaigns, stating that he never refused an invitation to preach.

It is difficult to put a time-line on many of Kornelius's stories of imprisonment and dealings with authorities, and it is also hard to differentiate what happened to him because he was an evangelist, and what was the result of his being a rich businessman. Probably already while they lived in Millerovo Kornelius was involved in the Baptist organizational structure, being in the leadership of the Evangelical Baptist Federation, and for years being one of 30 (some sources say 50) Federation evangelists for all of Russia.

During the initial Russian Revolution times were undoubtedly unsettled, but during the German occupation of April to November of 1918, both the church and the business probably did well. With the German withdrawal and the full impact of the Civil War, Millerovo was definitely affected adversely. During one of the times when the Communists were in power, about 100 prominent citizens were imprisoned, among them Kornelius. He was freed only after 50,000 rubles ransom were paid on his behalf. On 5 January 1919 the Martens, together with many others, lost their property and had to move into much smaller quarters. The extended family recognized that there was no future for them in Millerovo, so it was arranged that on the night of 7 December 1919 train cars were parked behind one of the family mills in Millerovo, and ten families, together with what they could manage to take along, quietly departed for the Caucasus. Kornelius and his family were in this group. When the train stopped in Rostov, Kornelius tried to make arrangements for his eldest daughter Maria to stay there with a special tutor. While he was gone Jakob Schulz, a company engineer who was also with the group, convinced Maria and her mother that it would be best if she stayed with the family. Faced with this majority opinion, Kornelius gave up the plan of leaving Maria, and she continued on travelling with the family. On 19 December the group arrived at Bogoslavaya, a railway station for the Kuban Mennonite Colony. The Martens family stayed with the Cornelius Wiens family in Welikoknyascheskoye.

Now no longer obligated to work for the factory, Kornelius spent his entire time in evangelism among the Russian and Cossack populations. Baptists were quite active in the Caucasus, so the transition to the new home was not difficult. As early as 1920 Kornelius was involved in the planning of a Baptist congress in the area.

It has already been mentioned that the Czarist government, under the influence of the Orthodox Church, persecuted groups such as the Baptists, who were actively evangelizing the surrounding population. After the disturbances of 1905-1906 the government promised religious freedom. In this milieu the Baptists expanded both in membership and organizationally. In 1905 the Federation of Russian Baptists was founded. D I Masayev of Rostov-on-Don became first chairman and editor of the periodical *The Baptist*. Ivan S Prochanov began to publish his paper *The Christian* in 1906, and founded the All-Russian Federation of Evangelical Christians in 1909. Fifty (30?) evangelists were sent out to all of Russia, and a training centre was begun. But the Czarist administration found it difficult to permit religious freedom in actual practice; all sorts of hindrances were used, and when war broke out in 1914 all semblance of religious toleration was dropped. During the Revolution and subsequent Civil War there was anarchy and destruction, but no organized religious persecution. With the Communist victory, surprisingly, persecution diminished. The Czar's government had banished the Communists to the same labour camps as the Evangelical Christians, so the Communists knew them. When they came to power they thought that Baptists and

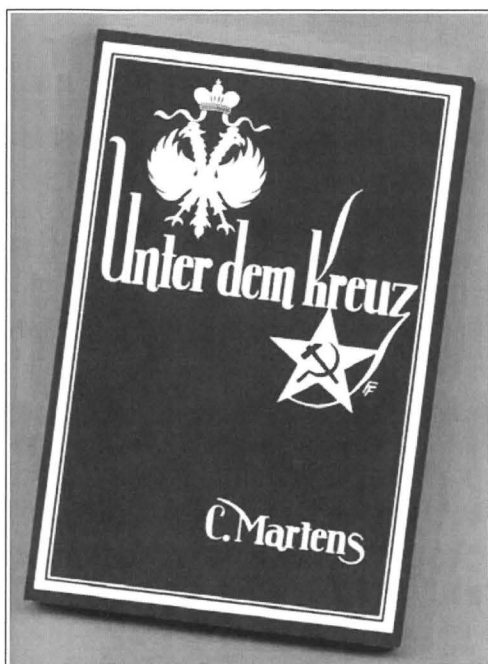
other evangelical groups might help break the power of the Orthodox Church. So the period from 1917 to about 1927 was called the “golden age” of the Baptist Church, with many converts, and many new churches established. After that, however, finding that the Evangelicals had their own agenda of evangelism, persecution started in earnest. These are the circumstances under which Kornelius Martens carried on his evangelistic campaigns.

While living in the Kuban, Kornelius was certainly very active in evangelism in that region, but he also travelled the whole of Russia. He had the propensity to collect official enabling certificates (*Vollmacht*) signed by members of the Baptist hierarchy. This seems to have allowed him to travel almost at will and certainly gave him immediate recognition in Baptist circles. On one occasion he was sent to Moscow to accompany a train of relief supplies to the south of Russia. His stories recount challenges to all kinds of officials, including judges; he did not, however, always manage to talk his way out of trouble. On a number of occasions he was incarcerated in various jails for months. While being very innovative in many respects, his devotional life had an absolute inflexibility. Even in a filthy jail cell, packed with desperate criminals, with no room to lie down, Kornelius had to kneel down for his prayer, and sing a song. He was, during some of the years of his stay in the Kuban, a member of the Mennonite Brethren Church.



Last family picture taken in Russia, in the late 1920s  
 first row l to r: Peter Unruh, Maria Martens, Jakob Schulz (Jr), Kornelius Martens,  
 and Susanna Unruh  
 second row l to r: Helene Unruh, Jakob Schulz, Maria Schulz, Wilhelm Martens  
 and Johann Unruh

Family life went on in the Caucasus. Apparently Kornelius was able to earn some money because of his engineering skills, although he kept specifics a secret so that his family would not be endangered. Daughter Maria, who had accompanied the family to the Kuban rather than staying in Rostov to study, married Jakob Schulz on 6 May 1921 in Wohldemfuerst. Susanna married Johann Johann Unruh on 29 May 1926, and a little more than two years later Helene married his brother Peter Johann Unruh on 23 August 1928, both weddings also taking place in Wohldemfuerst.

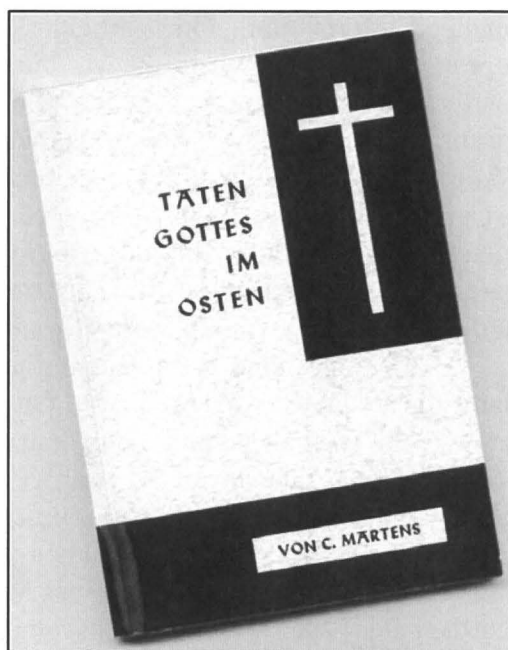


Eleventh printing in German in 1988

But time was running out for Kornelius. Warned by friends that plans were afoot to jail him, he prepared to leave the country. With one last farewell to his wife and daughters in the forest near Rostov-on-Don he made a secretive round of seeing his close friends and associates, then headed for Moscow to obtain his final exit papers. He was very persuasive, and occasionally slipped rubles to officials when necessary. With the appropriate documents and tickets in hand Kornelius and his 15 year old son crossed the Soviet border into Latvia, arriving in Riga in the summer of 1927.

Perhaps one should not judge too severely, but the thought does surface asking how Kornelius could leave his wife and three daughters in Russia, while he and his son escaped to freedom. It should be noted that there had been long periods of separation due to his frequent evangelistic travels while still in Russia, and his wife often had no idea where he was, so separation was nothing new. They may have also felt that this separation would be for a brief time only, thinking that surely the Communist regime must collapse. The possibility of Maria's wishing to stay in Russia to be able to reclaim the factory in Millerovo has also been mentioned.

Kornelius stayed in Germany for a time, likely visiting acquaintances, holding campaigns and writing about his experiences. He must have immediately spent much time and effort to write and publish *Unter dem Kreuz*, a recounting of his experiences up to that time. Likely on the advice of the publisher he changed the spelling of his name to Cornelius, which was more in vogue in Germany at the time. Three thousand copies were printed in 1928, 2,000 the next year. In all there have been 11 printings of this book in German, the last 1,000 coming off the presses in 1988, to total 40,000 in



Further writing, sequel to  
*Unter dem Kreuz*

all. Russian and French editions have also been printed, the last 1,500 Russian copies being printed in 2006. An English translation has recently been completed. He sent copies of *Unter dem Kreuz* to various officials, and received a note of thanks from President Paul von Hindenburg of Germany for his copy.

Once having grasped the pen Kornelius did not put it back in the holder. *Taten Gottes im Osten* is listed as a sequel to *Unter dem Kreuz*. *Schweigende Not* confronts the atrocities committed by the Soviets, especially the GPU. Few evangelists can resist the urge to predict the future, which Kornelius did with his *Vergangenheit, Gegenwart und Zukunft des Reiches Gottes*. Dr. A McCaig was intrigued by the stories Kornelius told, and documented them in *Grace Astounding in Bolshevik Russia*, first printed in Great Britain in 1928. Also in 1928 Kornelius was chosen as a delegate to represent the Russian Federation of Baptists at the Baptist World Alliance Congress held in Toronto, Ontario. He fully intended to be there, but was held up by the Canadian Consulate in Hamburg.

In 1928 Kornelius finally landed in Quebec, then settled in Winnipeg. But Canada was only a temporary stop. Before World War II he visited Europe at least eight times to hold evangelistic campaigns particularly among the expatriate Russians; he visited Estonia, Germany, The Netherlands, Switzerland, Poland, Bulgaria and Rumania, preaching in both Russian and German.

In the meantime Maria stayed in Russia. She acted as a conduit for foreign money to fund various mission projects, particularly for Baptist causes; those sending her money included her husband. She was made aware of the fact that the secret police were interested in her activities, so she moved from place to place, keeping one step ahead of them. While she was staying with a relative in Molochansk (Halbstadt) the police raided the house in early June of 1931, and found that she had in her possession 4,000 rubles and twenty-five US dollars in cash. She was arrested and sent to prison. After a preliminary hearing at midnight, she and a guard were sent to the regional prison in Kharkov, in streaming rain, on an open flatcar. Here she was officially judged, using previously-obtained information. One particular pastor had asked her for huge amounts of money, then repeatedly asked her where she was hiding. For some reason the police had always found her, no matter how careful she was. While being questioned in Kharkov it finally dawned on her that this pastor had been the spy. Maria was asked who her accomplices were; she did give the authorities some names, but was careful to mention only those who had already been banished, those who had escaped the west, or those who had died. Food in the jail was quite poor; somehow Maria was able to notify a friend of this. Although she herself was very poor this friend faithfully came to the prison gates every day to bring her fruits and vegetables. Maria still complained of hunger, little realizing at the time that these foods were very nutritious and probably saved her life.

After six months of frequent night-time interrogations Maria was sentenced to three years banishment in the far east of Siberia. One night 1,500 prisoners stumbled the ten kilometres through snow to the railway station. After four months of being shunted back and forth the group finally reached Alma Ata; many of the prisoners in the meantime had died of typhus and dysentery. In two months the prisoners resumed the journey another 1,000 kilometres further to an island on the Irtysh River. Here they had to live with the resident Kirgisiens, who themselves were desperately poor. Two and a half years into the sentence Maria was freed, so she was able to leave the island and join her daughter Helena, who with her family lived in the far north of Russia, near the White Sea.

Elder Wilhelm Dyck, father of Maria Martens, died in Niverville, Manitoba on 2 March 1936. Kornelius was in Mannheim, Germany at the time holding an evangelistic campaign. He





Kornelius and Maria Martens about 1950

wrote a letter to the editor of the *Mennonitische Rundschau* commenting "So my parents and parents-in-law have all died without my being able to look into their eyes one last time here on earth." They had all died having Jesus Christ as their saviour. His father died on the operating table while Kornelius was campaigning in the Caucasus (11 November 1919), his mother died when he was in jail (24 March 1923), his mother-in-law died while he was travelling in the United States (11

December 1931), and now his father-in-law died while he was on the campaign trail in Germany. But he still had recieved very meaningful last words from all of them, the last words from Elder Dyck being a letter he had written shortly before his death.

Kornelius was at the same time trying to use whatever means were at his disposal to get Maria to Canada. Through the good offices of President von Hindenburg, Kornelius had been able to obtain German citizenship for himself and Maria, holding a certificate dated 15 December 1932. By being German citizens, and through the German diplomatic service, he was in time able to have Maria come to Germany. One year and seven months after her sentence was completed permission finally arrived allowing her to leave the country. She crossed the border on 2 September 1936 at 8:30 PM, finally reaching Germany and greeting her husband and some of the children two days later. She had to stay in Germany until 1938 because of her health, but then arrived in Canada in July.

After her arrival in Winnipeg, Maria also wrote about her experiences, *Stormy Tides; Religious Persecutions in Soviet Russia. Life Experiences by Mrs M Martens*, which was published in Winnipeg in 1940. As well, she compiled a booklet about her father for Christmas that same year entitled *Aus dem Leben unsers Grossvaters, Wilhelm Dyck, weiland Aeltester der Mennoniten Bruedergemeinde in Millerovo, Dongebiet*. There were two separate versions, one for his children, and another one for his grandchildren and great-grandchildren. From about 1940 onward the Martens lived in a two story house at 83 Martin Avenue in Winnipeg. Kornelius and Maria were members of the McDermot Avenue Baptist Church.

Susanna and her husband Johann Unruh had been able to migrate to Canada in 1928. Because Jakob Schulz was a German citizen, Maria and he were able to escape to Germany in 1934. Helene and Peter Unruh remained in the far north of Russia, being able to leave only after World War II.

During World War II Kornelius was interned in Canadian concentration camps, first at Kananaskis, Alberta, then near Fredericton, New Brunswick, for five years, probably because of his uncompromising pro-German attitude. He was actually picked up in Speedwell, Saskatchewan, for receiving letters and packages from Germany. He said that he was treated well in the camp. Even this time of incarceration was a hidden blessing. With a lot of time on his hands he recalled many

of his friends and fellow workers from Russia and wrote another book *Die Pioniere und Helden des Russischen Protestantismus*, a 195 typewritten document briefly outlining the lives and times of many church leaders in Russia. Unfortunately he did not have a research archive at his disposal, so the document records only what he could remember.



Kornelius on evangelistic trail in Alberta, Canada

After the end of the war Kornelius resumed his evangelistic activities. He had campaigns in various parts of Canada and the United States. He seems to have been frugal, for example using a buggy in his Alberta visit. He was pastor of a small Russian group in Moosehorn, Manitoba, regularly travelling to this inter-lake community by bus for the Sunday services. He spent considerable time in South America, particularly in Argentina, Uruguay, Brazil and Paraguay. Witnesses who saw him in action in South America thought he was small, but although he was old he was very interactive and friendly. One young man was converted because Kornelius really made him afraid of the fires of hell as revealed in the end time prophecies.

During his time in Russia Kornelius frequently participated and preached at Baptist

conventions; his many official enabling certificates attest to that. He continued to attend, report to and preach at Baptist conventions after he arrived in North America. He very occasionally preached at the McDermot Avenue Baptist Church, but was not involved in the leadership. He seems to have financed his trips with the help of collections in the places where he ministered and through some income derived from his books. He was also part-owner, with his younger brother Johann, of a chicken farm in Elm Creek, Manitoba. His wife helped finance the home with little businesses such as selling Christmas cards.

Maria's health was deteriorating; she was a diabetic. Towards the end of May, 1961 there was infection in her leg, giving her severe pain; her children took good care of her. Two of her daughters, Maria and Susanna were at her side when she died 1 July 1961 at 6:30 AM.

49. Gnade muß es sein..

Anon. Bernh. Dued.

1. Gna-de muß es sein! Gna-de ganz al-lein! Al-leß an-d're  
 2. Al-leß eig'ne Wert nur den Hoch-mut nährt; Al-leß was ich  
 3. Wenn zu herb der Schmerz und schier bricht das Herz; Wenn im Tal es  
 4. Al-leß so Gnad'al-lein, Gna-de muß es sein; Gnad' zum Blei-ben,

muß ver-geh-en, Kann vor Je-sum nicht be-steh-en.  
 selbst er wor-ben, Hat die Sün-de ganz ver-dor-ben.  
 büß-tert, dun-selt, Schau ich auf, troß al-lem sun-selt.  
 Gnad' zum Geh-en, Gnad' ge-troßt beim Herrn zu steh-en.

Gna-de muß es sein, Gna-de ganz . . . al-lein.  
 Gna-de muß es sein, Gna-de ganz . . . al-lein.  
 Nur der Gna-de-schein, Gna-de muß . . . es sein.  
 Nichts als Gnad'al-lein, Gna-de muß . . . es sein.

Gna-de ganz al-lein.  
 Gna-de ganz al-lein.  
 Gna-de muß es sein.  
 Gna-de muß es sein.

Maria's favourite song

Kornelius was in Germany at the time, but he flew home to be at the funeral which was held in the North Kildonan Mennonite Brethren Church on 4 July 1961. Ministers presiding were Wilhelm Falk, H Bushkowski and Gerhard Ratzlaff. Maria's favourite song had been *Gnade muss es sein* written by Bernhard Dueck, a Russian Mennonite musician.

Until the age of 94 Kornelius was able to manage fairly well on his own. Thereafter for two years his daughters took turns looking after him, but then with great reluctance it was necessary to place him in a nursing home. He died 17 June 1974, with the funeral also being held at the North Kildonan Mennonite Brethren Church three days later. Pastor William Neufeld greeted the numerous friends and acquaintances who attended. Grandson Dr Cornelius Unruh spoke, stressing that his grandfather had preached in the name of the Lord. A choir of grandchildren and great grandchildren sang. Baptist minister Walter Stein referred to the suffering and persecution Martens had suffered.

In 1977 a memorial scholarship was established at the Mennonite Brethren Biblical Seminary of Fresno, California, in his honor. It is meant to help Canadian students attend the seminary.

Kornelius is remembered as being a "bit of an eccentric," very lively, friendly and kind, but also very frank. Children liked him, and were fascinated by his stories. He cared for others, sometimes dropping off clothing or requesting donations for those who were even poorer than he. It was admitted that he and his wife were both very determined people, and did not always agree on things. They lived their lives on "separate parallel tracks," although their long-term objectives were the same.

A verse of scripture that seemed to define the life of Kornelius Jakob Martens, and certainly determined many of his actions, was Luke 14:26: "If anyone comes to me and does not hate his father and mother, his wife and children, his brothers and sisters - yes even his own life - he cannot be my disciple." (NIV) Kornelius certainly lived by this principle of dedication to the cause of evangelism with unwavering diligence. One wonders if at times he may have applied it with unnecessary vigour.

#### Sources:

DeFehr, C A, *Memories of My Life, Recalled for My Family*, self-published, 1967, pp 19-29

*Forschung zur Geschichte und Kultur der Russlanddeutschen*, 1994, p 81

Hebly, J A, *Protestants in Russia*, translated from the Dutch edition (1973), William B

Eerdman Publishing Company, Grand Rapids, Michigan, 1976, pp 87-95

Hefley, James and Marti, *By Their Blood, Christian Martyrs of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century*, Mott Media, Milford, MI, pp 33-36

Kroeker, Abraham, *Christlicher Familienkalender*, 1912, p 145; 1914 p 159

Loewen, Heinrich Jr, *Russische Freikirchen*, Verlag fuer Kultur und Wissenschaft, Bonn, 1995, pp 37-57

Martens Family History and many pictures and documents

Martens, Kornelius, *Kurzer Ruekblick auf mein Leben*, an autobiography written in his later years, many pages

Martens, Kornelius, *Die Pioniere und Helden des russischen Protestantismus*, unpublished



- document written while he was interned in a concentration camp, likely 1940-45,  
many pages, especially 80-82
- Martens, Kornelius, typed out copies of various enabling certificates, mostly given by various  
Baptist organizations
- Martens, Mrs M, *Stormy Tides; Religious Persecutions in Soviet Russia; Life Experiences by  
Mrs Maria Martens*, self-published, Winnipeg Canada, 1940, many pages
- Martens, Maria (nee Dyck), *Aus dem Leben unseres Grossvaters Wilhelm Dyck, weiland  
Aeltester der Mennoniten Bruedergemeinde zu Millerovo, Dongebiet*, compiled by  
Maria Martens, published 1940
- Mennonitische Rundschau*
- Articles:
- “Stiftung zum Andenken an Prediger Cornelius J Martens,” 21-28 December 1977, p 16
- Letters to the Editor
- “Nachruf fuer den Aeltesten und Prediger Wilhelm Dyck,” 6 May 1936 p 6
- Obituaries:
- Martens, Prediger Cornelius Jakob, 31 July 1974 pp 11, 12
- Martens, Maria (nee Dyck), 19 July 1961, p 8
- Martens, Wilhelm Cornelius, 5 December 1990, p 23
- Schulz, Maria, November 1995, pp 32, 33
- Peters, K, *Genealogy of Heinrich Heese 1787-1977*, Winnipeg, Canada, 1978, pp 87-95
- Schroeder, William and Huebert, Helmut T, *Mennonite Historical Atlas*, Second Edition,  
Springfield Publishers, Winnipeg, Canada, 1996, pp 32, 47, 124
- Toews, A A, *Mennonitische Maertyrer*, Volume 2, self-published, North Clearbrook, British  
Columbia, 1954, pp 67-72
- Wilhelm Dyck Clan*, biographies and genealogy written by various members of the family, 1990,  
pp 13-23

**SOURCES**  
(for the entire Millerovo chapter)

- Balzer, Elfrieda, daughter of Wilhelm Isaak Dyck, family information  
Bergen, Heinrich, *Chortitza Colony Atlas*, Mennonite Historical Society of Saskatchewan,  
Saskatoon, Canada, 2004, pp 39-42, 43-48, 68-69, 75-77  
*Bibel und Pflug*  
Obituary:  
    Winter, Abram, 1 March 1969, p 4  
Centenary Celebration of birth of Abram A DeFehr (Senior), celebrated at the North Kildonan  
MB Church in 1979  
DeFehr, C A, *Memories of My Life*, printed for C A DeFehr by D W Friesen, Altona, Manitoba,  
1967, many pages, from vii to 231. A German version, *Erinnerungen aus  
meinem Leben*, was published in 1976. For this book the English version has been used  
DeFehr family information  
    Obituary of Cornelius Cornelius DeFehr by son William DeFehr  
DeFehr, Sara Heinrich, *Im Wandel der Jahre*, printed by Regehr's Printing, Winnipeg, Canada,  
1975, many pages  
*Der Bote*  
    Refugee Lists: 23 June 1925, p 7; 17 November 1926, p 5; 2 November 1927, p 4  
Dueck, Abe J, *Concordia Hospital 1928-1978*, printed by the Christian Press, Winnipeg,  
Canada, 1978, p 41  
Dueck, Abe, *Moving Beyond Secession*, Kindred Productions, Winnipeg, Manitoba and  
Hillsboro, Kansas, 1997, pp 12, 16, 58, 66, 72, 73, 75, 81, 83, 87, 93, 94, 96, 97, 100,  
101, 132, 142  
Dueck, Abe, "Cornelius A and Elizabeth (Dyck) DeFehr: Combining Service and Business," in  
*Profiles of Mennonite Faith*, No. 20, Summer, 2002  
Dyck, Maria, Report of the Delegation Trip to St. Petersburg, February and March, 1896  
*Forschungen zur Geschichte und Kultur der Russlanddeutschen*, Newsletter 1994, p 81  
*Friedensstimme*  
    Report of the baptismal service held 20 July 1908; 18 August 1908, p 518  
    Report of ordination service of Wilhelm Isaak Dyck; 31 May 1914, pp 5-6; 4 June 1914,  
    pp 2-3; 7 June 1914, p 2  
Friesen, P M, *Die Alt-Evangelische Mennoniten Bruderschaft in Russland (1789-1910)*,  
Raduga, Halbstadt, Taurida, Russia, 1911, pp 450, 464, 478  
Friesen, Rudy P with Friesen, Edith Elisabeth, *Building on the Past*, Raduga Publications,  
Winnipeg, Canada, 2004, pp 99, 699-705  
Goossen, Elizabeth (Betty) (nee Fast), granddaughter of C A DeFehr, family information  
*Great Soviet Encyclopedia* (A Translation of the Third Edition), Macmillan Inc., New York  
and Collier Macmillan Publishers, London  
    Millerovo: Vol 16, 1974, p 318  
    Rostov-on-Don and Rostov Oblast: Vol 22, 1975, pp 287, 289-91

- Hebly, J A, *Protestants in Russia*, translated from the Dutch edition (1973), William B Eerdmans Publishing Company, Grand Rapids, Michigan, 1976, pp 87-95
- Hefley, James and Marti, *By Their Blood, Christian Martyrs of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century*, Mott Media, Milford, MI, pp 33-36
- Hildebrandt, Martha, Schroeder family information
- Jahresbericht des Bevollmaechtigten der Mennonitengemeinden in Russland in Sachen der Unterhaltung der Forstkommandos im Jahre 1908* (Forstei Lists), p 16, 30
- Klassen, Robert L, *Life and Times of a Russian-German Mennonite Teacher: Cornelius A. Klassen (1883-1919) and Beyond*, self-published, pp 35, 36, 104, 105, 125
- Kroeker, A, *Christlicher Familienkalender*, 1912, p 145; 1914, pp 159, 223
- Kusmenko, Elena, *My City Millerovo*, Rostov-on Don, 2004, many pages (this book is in Ukrainian)
- Lohrenz, Gerhard, *Heritage Remembered*, CMBC Publications, Winnipeg, Canada, 1974, pp 51, 63, 65, 73, 74, 90, 138, 140
- Loewen, Heinrich Jr, *Russische Freikirchen*, Verlag fuer Kultur und Wissenschaft, Bonn, 1995, 37-57
- Martens, C, *Unter dem Kreutz: Erinnerungen aus dem alten und neuen Russland*, first printing in 1928, eleventh printing likely 1,000 copies, in Winnipeg, Canada, 1988
- Martens, Kornelius, *Kurzer Rueckblick auf mein Leben*, an autobiography written in his later years, many pages
- Martens, Kornelius, *Die Pioniere und Helden des russischen Protestantismus*, unpublished document written while he was interned in a concentration camp, likely 1940-45, many pages, especially 80-82
- Martens, Kornelius, typed out copies of various enabling certificates, mostly given by various Baptist organizations
- Martens Family History and many pictures and documents
- Martens, Mrs M, *Stormy Tides: Religious Persecutions in Soviet Russia*, Life Experiences by Mrs M Martens, self-published, Winnipeg, Canada, 1940, many pages
- Martens-Poetker Dokument, pp 2-10
- Mennonite Brethren Herald*
- Obituaries: (in chronological order):
- DeFehr, Cornelius Abram, 2 March 1979, p 33
  - Peters, Maria (nee DeFehr) 16 May 1979, p 30
  - Maria died 2 days before her brother C A DeFehr
  - Schellenberg, Maria (nee Sawadsky), 11 March 1983, p 29
  - Ratzlaff, Erich L, 25 November 1988, p 31
  - Unruh, Susanna C, 29 August 1997, p 24
  - Fast, Katharina (nee Penner), 5 March 1999, p 28
  - Hyde, Elizabeth (nee Wiebe), 8 October 1999, p 22
  - DeFehr, Cornelius C, 31 March 2000, p 28
  - Wiebe, William (Wilhelm), 8 June 2001, p 29
  - Reimer, Johann (John) L, 18 March 2005, p 29
- Mennonite Encyclopedia*, Vol I, pp 62-63; Vol II, pp 116, 686; Vol III p 693

*Mennonitische Rundschau*

Articles

“Schiftung zum Andenken an Prediger Cornelius J Martens,” 21-28 December, 1977,  
p 16

Obituaries: (in chronological order)

DeFehr, Helena (nee Peters), 1 July 1931, p 9

Dyck, Emilie (nee Poetker), 13 January 1932, p 10

Letter to the editor about Emilie Dyck written by Franz Adam, 10 February 1932, p 5

Dyck, Wilhelm Isaak, 11 March 1936, pp 1-3; 18 March 1936, pp 1-2

Notes of appreciation:

Neufeld, Hermann, editor of the *Mennonitische Rundschau*, 18 March 1936, p 2

Epp J; Regehr Gerhard P, 18 March 1936, pp 2-3

Martens, Kornelius Jakob, son-in-law, written from Mannheim, Germany,  
6 May 1936, p 6

Isaak, Franz Franz, 4 June 1944, pp 12, 13

Klassen, Jakob, 22 and 29 December 1948, pp 6, 7

DeFehr, Helena (nee Paetkau), 10 May 1961, p 11

Martens, Maria (nee Dyck), 19 July 1961, p 8

Fast, Bernhard Bernhard, 2 January 1964, pp 1, 4

DeFehr, Abram A, 23 November 1966, pp 1, 4

Ratzlaff, Richard L, 3 May 1967, pp 1, 3

Schroeder, Peter Peter, 19 July 1967, pp 1, 3

Penner, Helena (nee DeFehr), 23 September 1970, p 11

DeFehr, Heinrich Abram, 13 October 1971, pp 11, 12

DeFehr, Elisabeth (nee Dyck), 12 April 1972, p 11

Martens, Prediger Cornelius Jakob, 31 July 1974, pp 11, 12

Klassen, Katharina (nee DeFehr), 7 May 1975, pp 11, 12

Sawadsky, Louise, 25 October 1978, p 7

DeFehr, Cornelius Abram, 28 February 1979, pp 1, 4; 16 March 1979, pp 2, 3

Schellenberg, Maria (nee Sawadsky), 23 February 1979, p 27

DeFehr, Wilhelm Cornelius, 16 September 1987, pp 25, 26

Ratzlaff, Erich L, 23 November 1988, pp 25, 26

Martens, Wilhelm Cornelius, 5 December 1990, p 23

Schulz, Maria (nee Martens), November 1995, pp 32, 33

DeFehr, Abram A (III), September 1998, pp 30, 31

Ratzlaff, Peter, June 2002, p 31

Refugee Lists: 16 February 1921 pp 6, 7; 13 December 1922, p 37; January 1925 p 14;

11 February 1925, p 20; 4 March 1925 Beilage, pp 17, 18, 19, 20; 6 October 1926, p 9

Reports:

Regarding the *Allrussische Mennonitische Bunderkonferenz* held in Moscow in 1925,  
1 April 1925 p 9

Memorial Service in honour of Wilhelm Isaak Dyck held in the North-End MB Church  
25 March 1936, pp 6, 7

- Report of the diamond wedding celebration of Peter and Anna Schroeder,  
13 June 1962, pp 1, 4
- Report of Wilhelm Isaak Dyck's trip to Turkestan, taken from his own diary:  
17 April 1968, p 14; 24 April 1968, p 14; 1 May 1968, p 14; 15 May 1968, p 14;  
22 May 1968, p 14; this report does not include the trip back
- Requests for Food Drafts: 19 April 1922, p 5  
13 September 1922, pp 11, 14
- Mennonitisches Lexikon*, Erster Band, p 21. Alexanderheim was a village of renters established  
in 1889. Its church was an affiliate of the Einlage MB Church
- Neufeld, Elder Hermann A, Katharina Neufeld, *Their Story, The Autobiography of Elder  
Herman A. Neufeld and Katharina Neufeld, in Russia and Canada*, translated and  
edited by Abram H Neufeld, Centre for Mennonite Brethren Studies in Canada,  
Winnipeg, Canada, 1984, pp 69, 72, 78, 102
- Northern District Conference of the Mennonite Brethren Church Yearbook*, held in Main  
Centre, Saskatchewan 7-10 July 1935
- Peters, K, *Genealogy of Heinrich Heese 1787-1977*, Winnipeg, Canada, 1978, pp 87-95
- Poetker, Paul G, *The Poetker Journal*, Edmonton, Alberta, Canada, pp 20-24
- Quiring, Walter and Bartel, Helen, *Als Ihre Zeit Erfuellt War*, Saskatoon, Saskatchewan, 1963,  
pp 16, 102
- Ratzlaff, Erich L, *Im Weichsenbogen: Mennonitensiedlungen in Zentralpolen*, Christian Press,  
Winnipeg, Canada, 1971, p 41
- Rempel, Betty, Rempel-Thiessen-Dyck family information
- Rempel, Richard produced the cartoon relating to the Maria Dyck story. We used  
page 6 from the graphic story *Going Home* by Mary Dyck and Richard Rempel
- Schroeder Family Register (Wilhelm) 1761 -
- Schroeder, William and Huebert, Helmut T, *Mennonite Historical Atlas*, Second Edition,  
Springfield Publishers, Winnipeg, Canada, 1996, pp 13, 19, 21, 32, 47, 50, 58, 119, 124
- Toews, A A, *Mennonitische Maertyrer*, Volume 2, self-published, North Clearbrook, British  
Columbia, 1954, pp 67-72
- Toews, John B, *Lost Fatherland*, Herald Press, Scottdale, Pennsylvania, 1967, p 16
- Unruh, Benjamin Heinrich, *Die niederlaendisch-niederdeutschen Hintergruende der  
mennonitischen Ostwanderung im 16., 18. und 19 Jahrhundert*, Im Selbstverlag,  
Karlsruhe, Germany, 1955, p 240
- Unser Blatt*, News Report, October 1926, pp 21-23
- Vogt, Willi, *Mennonitische Ahnenforschung*
- Wieler, Elizabeth (Betty), granddaughter of Wilhelm Isaak Dyck, family information
- Wilhelm Dyck Clan*, a family history written by members of the family, 1990, many pages
- Zionsbote*
- Report: The Itinerant ministry of Wilhelm Isaak Dyck, 2 April 1930, pp 7-8

# Chapter V

# ORECHOV

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

Table of Contents.....	355
History of Orechov.....	356
Pictures of Orechov.....	357
Map of Orechov “Rayon”(1972) .....	358
Map of Orechov City (2000).....	359
List of People.....	360
Pictures of People.....	367
Mennonite and Orechov Institutions.....	369
Mennonite Businesses.....	370
Advertising.....	371
Sources.....	372

## HISTORY OF ORECHOV

Orechov was originally founded on about 1793 near the Konka River; it was incorporated in 1801. It is situated about 50 km southeast of Alexandrovsk (Zaporozhye), and almost the same distance north of the Molotschna Colony. In 1818 Orechov appeared to be a place where military personnel of the Czar was stationed; an officer from Orechov came out to finalize arrangements for the Czar's visit to Lindenau in May of that year. As early as 1836 a "Salt Road" (*Tschumakenweg*) connected Orechov with Perekop to the south, the road running through the Molotschna Colony. This road was still shown on maps of 1852. In 1850 Orechov was within the boundaries of Taurida, near the northeast border of that province. When the railway was built connecting Alexandrovsk to Berdyansk it went through Orechov, presumably helping the development of the city, giving easy access to the port at Berdyansk.

The first Mennonites likely settled in Orechov as early as the 1830s. By 1852 there were two windmills in Orechov owned by Mennonites (Kornelius Ediger and Kornelius Heinrichs) as well as a treadmill and oil press operated by Aaron Wiens. In the 1860s a number of families moved from Schoenwiese of the Chortitza Colony to Orechov. Among these was Johann Heinrich (Ivan Andreievitch) Janzen, who built two large steam-powered flour mills and encouraged other Mennonite businessmen to follow his example.

By 1874 the small Mennonite community, in cooperation with the equally small Lutheran group, had built a church and a school. Apparently the Mennonites and Lutherans had joint services in the church, but for major festivals the Mennonites tended to go to their home churches, for many this being Schoenwiese in the Chortitza Colony. They also went back to their home churches to allow the young people to meet prospective marriage partners.

In 1874 Johann Heinrich (Ivan Andreievich) Janzen was elected mayor of Orechov. Despite some opposition from the business community because Janzen was German, the governor of the province encouraged him to continue in his position, Orechov being one of the few cities with a positive balance sheet despite an aggressive school building program. Janzen retired in 1899.

At the end of the nineteenth century, of a population of 10,000, there were only about 200 "Germans" in total (called *niemsty*), which included approximately equal numbers of Mennonites and Lutherans.

Only one Mennonite estate, Rosenheim (Epp) was listed as being close to Orechov, while Wintergruen Estate was 14 verst east-southeast of the city. These estates, of course, no longer exist.

Peter Kondratyevitch Pavlenko was principal of the Halbstadt Zentralschule in 1909 and 1910, also teaching in the areas of mathematics and pedagogy; before that he had been on the faculty of the secondary school in Orechov.

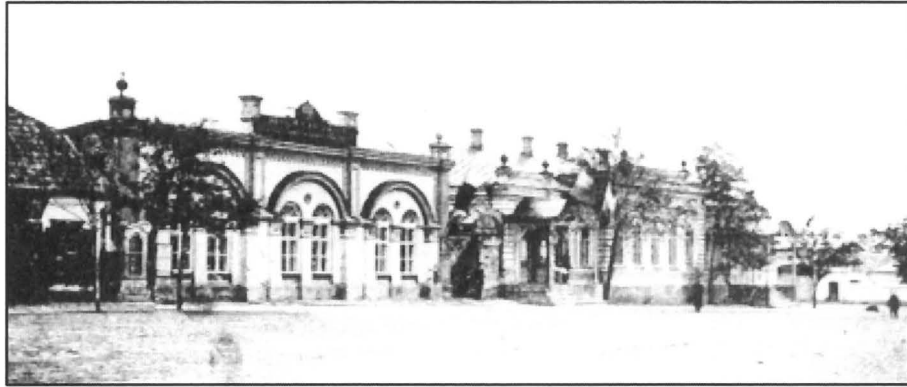
In 1918-1919 Orechov was in the centre of the area controlled by the anarchist-bandit Nestor Makhno, so it likely suffered the usual consequences of being occupied by his army. During the subsequent Civil War it was over-run a number of times as the vicissitudes of war caused frequent changes in the struggles between the Whites and the Reds. Orechov was the base from which the Red Army surged southward to finally defeat the Mennonite *Selbstschutz* in early March of 1919, eventually leading to the capitulation in Gnadenfeld, Molotschna on 11 March.

Orechov attained city status in 1938. In 1972 it was the capital of the Orechov Region,



Zaporozhye Oblast. In 1990 the population was 21,200. Main industries produced clothing, machinery and building supplies. There is a metallurgy plant, "Orechov Quarry of Molding Materials," which deals with refractory materials, and a sugar refinery. The city also has a regional museum.

There are no obvious traces of the Mennonite past remaining.



Orechov street in 1910



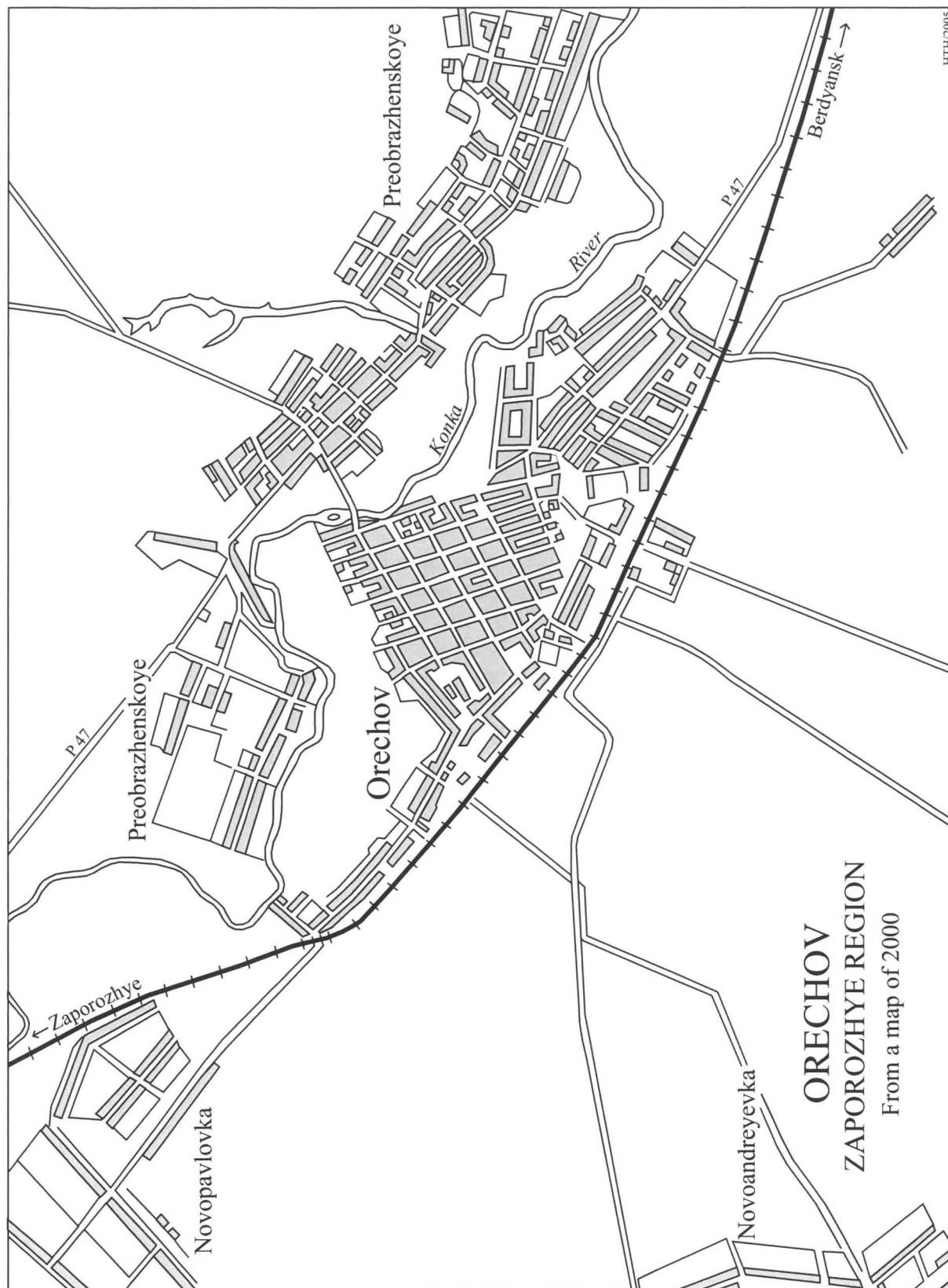
The Johann Janzen residence

# ORECHOW "RAYON" 1972

According to a map published  
in Encyclopedia of Ukraine  
using Russian spelling



HTH/2005



## LIST OF PEOPLE

(People who at one time lived in Orechov)  
(Each name will appear in **bold** print only once)

In all 138 specific individuals have been identified as having spent at least some part of their lives in Orechov.

### **Balzer, Mr**

Wife **Mrs Balzer**

Son **Franz** born 19 August 1880

### **Dick, Jakob**

Owner of a mill with motor in 1908

Mill worth 1,500 rubles in 1908 according to the *Forstei* taxation list

### **Dirks, Alexander Peter**

Born 28 December 1891 in Gnadenfeld, Molotschna

Parents Peter Dirks and Elisabeth Fast

Fifth of 12 children

Father Peter was a woodworker

1897 family moved to Spat, Crimea

Alexander completed *Zentralschule* in Gnadenfeld, then Teachers College in Halbstadt

1909 passed his examinations, and began teaching in the Mennonite school in Orechov

Younger brother Nicholas lived with him 1912-1916 while he was studying

Drafted into *Forstei*, then volunteered for the *Sanitaetsdienst*

After he was discharged in 1917 he taught in Waldheim, Molotschna

Married Agnes Warkentin May 1920, they had 8 children, the first 2 born in Russia

Immigrated to Canada June 1924, by autumn 1926 started teaching

Ordained as minister 1929

Retired from teaching 1957, died 16 December 1985 in Winnipeg, Manitoba

### **Dirks, Nicholas Peter**

Born 27 April 1897 in Mare, Crimea

Parents Peter Dirks and Elisabeth Fast

One of the younger of 12 children

Elementary school in Spat

1909 family furniture business moved to Neu Schoensee, Sagradovka

1912-1916 completed higher education in Orechov, likely the state *Gymnasium*, staying with his brother Alexander, who was a teacher

Became *Sanitaeter*, discharged in 1918

Married Anastasia in 1921, immigrated to Canada in 1925

6 children, furniture business

Died 7 September 1978 in Winnipeg, Manitoba

### **Dueck, Mr**

Was robbed in his quarters October 1907

Robbers wanted the 500 rubles he had received from factory owner Krueger

He claimed not to have the money, so robbers searched the place, but did not find it  
One robber shot at Dueck as they were leaving; he sustained a slight chest wall wound  
In a few days the robbers were apprehended

**Ediger, Kornelius** (perhaps the same as Kornelius Eitzen?)

Owner of a windmill in 1852

**Eitzen, Johann Daniel**

Born 21 August 1838 in Berdyansk

Parents Daniel Daniel Eitzen and Helena Fast

Married **Helena Eitzen**, probably about 1862

Her parents were Cornelius Daniel Eitzen and Anna Peter Niessen

(There is a document which claims her maiden name was Harder)

Johann was a partner in a flour mill in Orechov

13 children, born between 1863 and 1882, some, **perhaps 3**, born in Orechov

Probably lived most of the time in Schoenwiese, Chortitza Colony, certainly between 1870 and 1880

Helena died 16 May 1914, Johann died 22 October 1915

**Eitzen, Kornelius Daniel**

Born about 1795

Family came to Russia in 1795, settling in Schoenwiese, Chortitza Colony

Moved to Sparrau, Molotschna in 1829, to Orechov in 1930

Owned a windmill and an oil mill in 1852

Married **Anna Peter Niessen**, who was born in 1806 in Burwalde, Chortitza Colony

Kornelius died some time after 1852

Children: (there is not complete agreement of the various lists)

**Aganetha** - born 15 December 1825 in Schoenwiese, Chortitza Colony

Married Heinrich Holzrichter of Grossweide, Molotschna, 5 children

Immigrated to Mountain Lake, Minnesota, crossing the ocean on the

*S S Vaderland*, landing in Philadelphia on 28 July 1876

Died 17 July 1879 in Mountain Lake, Minnesota

**Margaretha** - born about 1828 in Schoenwiese

**Anna** - born about 1830

Married Johann Schmidt, who died, then married Abram Schmidt

Total of 9 children

They probably lived in Schoenwiese

**Kornelius** - born about 1831 in Orechov

**Maria** - born about 1832 in Orechov

Married Wilhelm Holzrichter, probably brother of Heinrich, who married

Aganetha, 3 children

Immigrated to the USA, crossing the ocean on the *S S Vaderland*, landing in

Philadelphia on 28 July 1876

Family apparently returned to Russia

**Helena** - born 5 May 1840 in Orechov, baptized 1 June 1859, married Johann Daniel

Eitzen (see separate listing Johann Daniel Eitzen)

**Heinrichs, Kornelius**

Born about 1822

Wife **Maria** - born about 1821

Son **Jakob** - born about 1849

Moved from Schardau, Molotschna, to Orechov in 1848

Operated his own windmill in 1852

**Janzen, Heinrich Johann**

Born 28 October 1863 in Orechov

Parents Johann Heinrich Janzen and Katharina Schroeder

Married **Helene Thiessen**, born 21 September 1872

Children:

**Johann** - born 7 December 1894 in Orechov

Married (1) Helene Belepolsky, (2) Maria Wiens

Died 2 December 1987

**Heinrich** - born about 1895 in Orechov, died as an infant

**Olga** - born 14 August 1897 in Orechov

Student at the local *Gymnasium* in 1916

She married Hermann Johann Lepp, a patent engineer

Had 2 children who died in infancy

Hermann was arrested and disappeared in 1937

Olga immigrated to Winnipeg

Died 1986 in Winnipeg, Manitoba

**Lydia** - born about 1899 in Orechov, died as an infant

**Victor** - born 14 December 1901 in Orechov

Married (1) Antonina Gluschko (2) Helene M Dyck in Winnipeg

Lived his last years and likely died in Winnipeg

**Heinrich** - born 1904 in Orechov, died in 1934

Owner of a flour mill in Orechov valued at 40,000 rubles by the *Forstei* taxation list in 1908

Owner of an estate of 437½ dessiatines in 1908

Father Heinrich died 30 June 1916 in the Ural Mountain region, Russia

Helena died 1960 in Winnipeg, Canada

**Janzen, Johann Heinrich**

Also known as Ivan Andreievich

In one listing is called "Mill owner, salesman, estate owner, mayor of Orechov"

Born in Schoenwiese, Chortitza Colony, 18 May 1837

Married **Katharina Schroeder**

Moved to Orechov some time before 1863

The flower garden of Katharina was known throughout the city

Children:

Heinrich - born 28 October 1863 in Orechov died 30 June 1916 in Orechov (see separate listing Heinrich Johann Janzen)

**Johann** - born 13 April 1865 in Orechov, died 14 January 1912 in Okretsch, Crimea

**Helena** - born 25 April 1866 in Orechov, died 12 May 1933 in Simferopol, Crimea

**Jakob** - born 28 Aug 1870 in Orechov, died 24 September 1913 in Okretschny, Crimea  
**Aganetha** - born 23 October 1877 in Orechov, married Jakob Jakob Toews, died 4 Aug 1956 in St. Catharines, Ontario  
(see separate listing, Aganetha Toews)

**Katharina** - born 25 May 1879 in Orechov, died 15 March 1929 in Genoa, Italy  
Married Rik Pignatelli

**Margaretha** - born 30 December 1880 in Orechov  
Married Johann P Schroeder, an estate owner  
They likely lived on the estate  
One daughter Vera born 26 January 1908, Johann died 15 November 1913,  
Margaretha died 6 February 1940 Egoryevsk District, South Russia

**Anna** - born 23 February 1886 in Orechov, died April 1937 Egoryevsk District, South Russia

Owned a very elaborate home

Mayor of Orechov for 25 years, 1874-1899

Owner of 2 large steam-powered flour mills; encouraged other Mennonite businessmen to locate to Orechov

During his time as mayor the governor of the province repeatedly asked him to stay on  
The governor felt that it was unusual for such a city to be out of debt, even have an 11,000 ruble surplus in spite of building two large three-classroom schools and a church

Janzen received 3 medallions in recognition of his work

There was some resentment expressed by the business community because he was German

Janzen was recovering from typhus when he developed a neck carbuncle, and died in 4 days, on 16 December 1901

About 4,000 people in the funeral procession

**Krieger, Johann Johann** (could be Krueger?)

Daughter **Maria**

Daughter **Margaretha**

Mother **Martha Krieger**

Sister **Margaretha**

Immigrated to Canada, landing at St John on 25 December 1926, settling in Gruenthal, Manitoba

**Krueger, Johann**

Owner of a machine shop and foundry in 1908

Business was worth 10,000 rubles in 1908 according to the *Forstei* taxation list

Produced grain and grass mowers, threshing machines, various types of mills and stoves

**Martens, Abraham**

Wife **Anna**

Daughter **Katharina (Katie)**

Anna died 1920, Abraham married Agnes Hubert in 1921

Immigrated to Canada in 1926, settling in Crowfoot, Alberta

Katharina worked as cook on a ranch age 16, then as housekeeper in Calgary

Gem Bible School one year



Married David Heidebrecht 13 November 1937, moved to Lindbrook, Alberta, then to Abbotsford, BC in 1947, 5 children, died 14 October 2005

**Neufeld, Abraham Abraham (Sr)**

Born 17 October 1820 in Kronsweide, Chortitza Colony

Married **Helena Neufeld** 16 November 1842, she was born 13 March 1820, died October 1857

Married again, **Helena Unrau**, 1 January 1858. She was born 16 December 1834

Moved from Kronsweide, Chortitza Colony to Orechov in 1847

In 1852 owned a flour mill in Orechov together with his brother Peter

Probably moved from Orechov to Sergeyevka, Fuerstenland Colony by 1860

Children:

Susanna - born 1843 in Silberfeld, died 1845

Abraham - born 5 February 1845, died 14 April 1909 (see separate listing)

Jakob - born 8 August 1847 in Orechov, died in Winkler, Manitoba  
(see separate listing Jakob Abraham Neufeld)

**Katharina** - born 19 March 1850 in Orechov, died 1904

Married Franz Giesbrecht of Franzfeld Yazykovo Colony in 1872

Lived in many places with Jakob either farming or working in factories

Were pitifully poor, had 8 children

**Johann** - born 8 November 1852 in Orechov

Married Katharina Peters in 1875, had 6 children, she died 10 April 1919

Married again Katharina Kirsch in 1921

He lived in the Nepluyevka Colony, then later in Nikolayevka, Ignatyev  
Colony, where he died February 1922

**Peter** - born 6 October 1858 in Orechov, died 2 January 1914, likely in Sergeyevka

Married Helena Martens in 1884 in Sergeyevka, Fuerstenland Colony

Had 6 children

Worked in various communities, the last being the Klassen-Janzen  
machine shop and foundry in Sergeyevka

Hermann - born 24 June 1860 in Sergeyevka, Fuerstenland Colony

Married Katharina Klassen 6 February 1883 in Olgafeld, Fuerstenland  
11 children

Lived in Sergeyevka, then moved to Nikolayevka about 1892

Immigrated to Canada, perhaps in 1923

Died 28 September 1931 in Winkler, Manitoba

Father Abraham Abraham (Sr) died 13 May 1886 in Steinfeld

**Neufeld, Abraham Abraham (Jr)**

Born 5 February 1845 in Kronsweide, Chortitza Colony

Parents Abraham Abraham Neufeld and Helena Neufeld

Married **Anna Friesen** in 1871

Worked with his father in the mill in Orechov for some time, but also in Naunbrug and on a  
Neustaedt estate

Had 9 children, all of whom were born in Orechov

Very suspicious that the family history is not accurate - many seem to have had

4 daughters and 4 sons

Children:

**Mrs Jakob Penner** (first name not listed)

**Abraham** - born March 1878, married,

wife, **4 daughters and 4 sons**, lived in Orechov

**Anna** - born 24 March 1882, married,

husband, **4 daughters and 4 sons**, lived in Orechov

**Johann** - born 6 March 1884

Married **Anna Enns**, **4 daughters and 4 sons**

Lived in Orechov for some time

Died 26 October 1960 in Winnipeg, Manitoba

**Elisabeth** (Lisa) - born May 1886, married,

husband, **4 daughters and 4 sons**, lived in Orechov

**Peter** - born 20 May 1888, lived in Orechov

**Katharina (Tina)** - born 27 February 1890, married,

husband, **4 daughters and 4 sons**, lived in Orechov

**Maria** - born 22 March 1892, married

husband, **4 daughters and 4 sons**, lived in Orechov

**Jakob** - born 20 January 1895

Father Abraham Abraham Neufeld died 14 April 1919

#### **Neufeld, Jakob Abraham**

Born 8 August 1847 in Orechov

Parents Abraham Abraham Neufeld and Helena Neufeld

Not sure how long he lived in Orechov

Married Maria M Penner 24 November 1870; she died 30 August 1905 in Canada

Married again, Katharina Penner, 14 January 1906

Jakob worked in the Molotschna Colony, farmed, then worked in the Lepp and

Wallmann factory in Chortitza, then purchased a farm in the Nepluyevka region

Immigrated to Winkler, Manitoba in 1878

11 children, born between 1872 and 1890

Jakob died 1912 in Winkler, Manitoba (other dates of death listed as 1915 or 1921)

Buried in Winkler, Manitoba

#### **Neufeld, Peter Abraham**

Born about 1829

Wife **Susanna** - born about 1825

Daughter **Susanna** - born about 1851

Owned a flour mill together with his brother Abraham

Moved from Kronsweide, Chortitza Colony to Orechov in 1850

#### **Reimer, Anna**

Born about 1829 in Lichtenau, Molotschna

Parents Johann Johann and Sara Reimer of Kronsweide at No 57; father died before 1850

Moved to Chortitza in 1836

Moved from Kronsweide, Chortitza to Orechov in 1853

Listed as a worker

**Reimer, Franz**

Born about 1832 in Lichtenau, Molotschna

Parents Johann Johann and Sara Reimer of Kronsweide at No 57; father died before 1850

Moved to Chortitza in 1836

Moved from Kronsweide, Chortitza Colony to Orechov in 1850

Worked as a miller

**Reimer, Johann**

Born about 1833 in Lichtenau, Molotschna

Parents Johann Johann and Sara Reimer of Kronsweide No 57; father died before 1850

Moved to Chortitza in 1836

Moved from Kronsweide, Chortitza Colony to Orechov in 1853

Worked as a miller

**Rempel, Mr**

Born about 1870

Parents David Rempel and Maria Duerksen

His widowed mother married Heinrich J Thiessen, formerly of Hierschau

Mr Rempel married **Aganetha Eitzen**

They lived in Orechov

**Schellenberg, David David**

In 1922 applied for food drafts for 2 people through the *Mennonitische Rundschau*

Presumably had a **wife**

Address: Gogolevskaya Street 8, Orechov

**Schultz, Jakob Jakob**

Born about 1892

Wife **Katharina** - born about 1883

Son **Jakob** - born about 1924

Immigrated to Canada on 29 May 1926, settling in Elm Creek, Manitoba

**Toews, Aganetha (nee Janzen)**

Born 23 October 1877 in Orechov

Parents Johann Heinrich Janzen and Katharina Schroeder

Married Jakob Jakob Toews on 1 June 1899

Probably moved to Ekaterinoslav (later Dnepropetrovsk)

Children: Theodora, Martha, Michael, Theodor, Magdalena, Jakob, Ivan, Margaretha

Husband Jakob died 16 December 1940 in Dnepropetrovsk

Aganetha died 4 Aug 1956 in St Catharines, Ontario

**Wiens, Aaron**

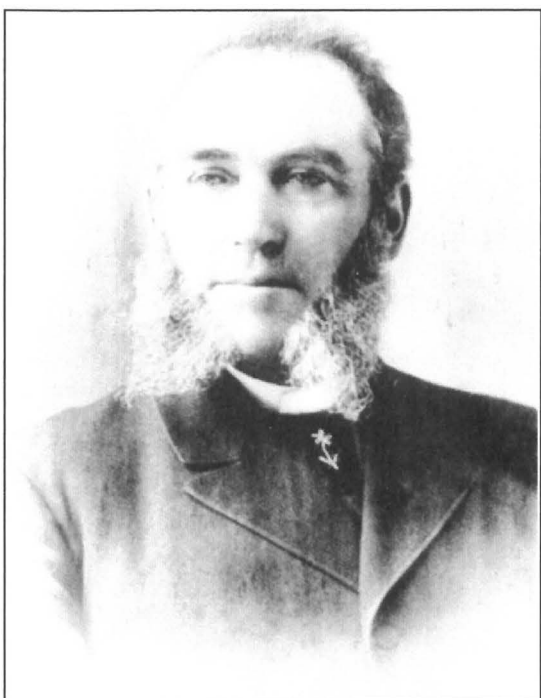
Born about 1766

Wife **Sara** - born about 1796

Son **Peter** - born about 1827, worked as miller

Moved from Rudnerweide, Molotschna to Orechov in 1852

Owner of a treadmill and oil mill in 1852



Johann Janzen, mayor of Orechov



Katharina Janzen, wife of the mayor of Orechov, known throughout the city for her flower garden



The Johann Janzen family



Olga Janzen, granddaughter of  
Mayor Johann Janzen



Olga (nee Janzen) and Hermann Lepp  
He was arrested and disappeared in 1937

## MENNONITE INSTITUTIONS

### **Mennonite Church**

The Mennonite and the Lutheran communities, totalling about 200 people, joined in the building of a church

The church and the school were built by 1874

They had joint services

For major festivities, however, most of the Mennonites went to the Schoenwiese Church in the Chortitza Colony. The drama presentations and the choirs at Schoenwiese “made it worth it” according to Olga Lepp (nee Janzen). The young people also had to meet prospective Mennonite marriage partners

### **Mennonite School**

The Mennonite and the Lutheran communities joined in the building and operation of a school.

The church and school were built by 1874

Alexander Peter Dirks taught there 1909 until at least 1914, possibly 1916

## ORECHOV INSTITUTIONS USED BY MENNONITES

### ***Gymnasium***

Olga Janzen listed as student in 1916

Nicholas Peter Dirks probably attended 1912 to 1916

## MENNONITE BUSINESSES

### **Dick, Jakob**

Owned a mill with motor in 1908

Valued at 1,500 rubles in 1908

### **Ediger, Kornelius**

Owned a windmill in 1852

### **Eitzen, Johann Daniel**

Partner owner of a flour mill

### **Eitzen, Kornelius**

Owned a windmill and an oil mill in 1852

### **Heinrichs, Kornelius**

Owned a windmill in 1852

### **Janzen, Heinrich Johann**

Owned a large steam-powered flour mill in Orechov

Valued at 40,000 rubles in 1908

He also owned an estate of 437½ dessiatines in 1908

*Forstei* tax on the estate for 1908 was 52 rubles 50 kopeks, which he paid

He himself was based, and possibly lived for some time in Mariawohl, Molotschna

### **Janzen, Johann Heinrich**

Owned 2 large steam-powered flour mills

Encouraged other Mennonite businessmen to come to Orechov

Was mayor of Orechov 1874-1899

### **Krueger, Johann**

Owned a machine shop and foundry manufacturing agricultural machinery

Valued at 10,000 rubles in 1908

Advertised in 1910 as producing grain and grass mowers, threshing machines for 6 or 8 horses, various types of mills and stoves

In 1904 he had 15 employees, in 1912 there were 35, and in 1914 there were 50

### **Neufeld, Abraham A** and brother **Peter A Neufeld**

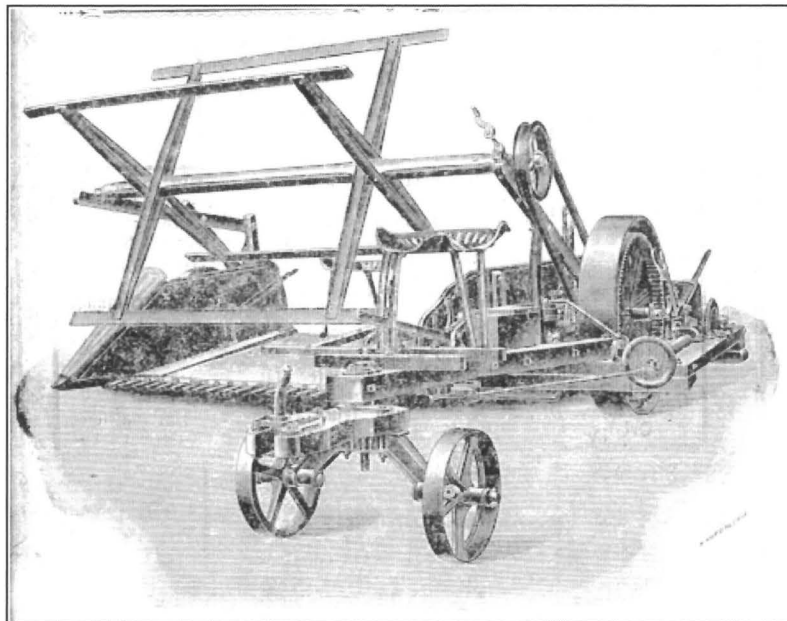
Owned a flour mill by 1852

### **Wiens, Aaron**

Owned a treadmill and oil mill in 1852

There seems to have been a considerable Mennonite business community in Orechov quite early on. There were at least 7 business enterprises by 1852; there were three windmills, two oil mills, a treadmill and one mill where mode of power is not mentioned.





Johann Krueger advertising in the 1910 *Christlicher Familienkalender*, showing a grain mower/reaper



Helene and Heinrich Janzen. They likely lived in Mariawohl, Molotschna, but owned a mill in Orechov, as well as an estate

## SOURCES

(for the entire Orechov chapter)

*Christlicher Familienkalender*, Halbstadt, Taurida, 1910, p 149

*Cities and Villages of Ukraine*, Kiev, 1970, pp 525-531

*Der Bote*

Obituary:

Dirks, Alexander Peter, 22 January 1986, p 6

Refugee Lists: 23 June 1925, p 7; 2 March 1927, p 4

*Encyclopedia of Ukraine*, University of Toronto Press Incorporated, Toronto, 1993

Epp, George K, "Urban Mennonites in Russia," a chapter in the book *Mennonites in Russia*, edited by John Friesen, CMBC Publications, Winnipeg, Canada, 1989, pp 246, 247, information about Orechov largely from an interview of Olga Lepp (nee Janzen)

EWZ Lists: Mennonite extracts

*Forschungen zur Geschichte und Kultur der Russlanddeutschen*, Newsletter 1994, pp 63-64  
*Friedensstimme*

2 November 1907, p 582

Friesen, P M, *Die Alt-Evangelische Mennonitische Bruederschaft in Russland (1789-1910)*, Raduga, Halbstadt, Taurida, 1911, pp 143, 152, 604

Friesen, Rudy P with Friesen, Edith Elisabeth, *Building on the Past*, Raduga Publications, Winnipeg, Canada, 2004, pp 707, 708

Hiebert, Clarence, *Brothers in Deed to Brothers in Need*, Faith and Life Press, Newton, Kansas, 1974, p 296

Huebert, Helmut T, *Hierschau: An Example of Russian Mennonite Life*, Springfield Publishers, Winnipeg, Canada, 1986, pp 164, 165, 179, 209

Huebert, Helmut T, *Molotschna Historical Atlas*, Springfield Publishers, Winnipeg, Canada, 2003, pp 4-6

Huebert, Helmut T, *Mennonite Estates in Imperial Russia*, Springfield Publishers, Winnipeg, Canada, 2005, pp 169, 214, 229

*Jahresbericht des Bevollmaechtigten der Mennonitengemeinden in Russland in Sachen der Unterhaltung des Forstkommandos im Jahre 1908*, pp 18, 22

List of Mennonites living outside the Molotschna Colony in 1852, Odessa State Archives

List of Mennonites living outside the Chortitza Colony in 1852, Odessa State Archives

Lohrenz, Gerhard, *Heritage Remembered*, CMBC Publications, Winnipeg, Canada, 1974, pp 62, 100, 111, 112

*Mennonite Brethren Herald*

Obituary:

Dirks, Nicholas Peter, 24 November 1978, p 33

Heidebrecht, Katharina (Katie) (nee Martens), 9 June 2006

*Mennonitische Rundschau*

26 March 1901, p 10; 3 April 1901, p 6; 9 April 1902, p 4

List of people needing Food Drafts: 14 June 1922, p 7

Refugee Lists: 6 October 1926, p 9

Peters, Kaethe, *Heinrich Thiessen 1755-1976*, compiled for John Thiessen by Kaethe Peters, Winnipeg, Canada

Quiring, Walter and Bartel, Helen, *Als Ihre Zeit Erfuellt War: 150 Jahre Bewaehrung in Russland*, Saskatoon, Canada, 1963, pp 46, 47

Schroeder, William and Huebert, Helmut T, *Mennonite Historical Atlas*, Springfield Publishers, Winnipeg, Canada, 1996, pp 63, 64

# Chapter VI

## POLOGI

### TABLE OF CONTENTS

Table of Contents.....	374
History of Pologi.....	375
Map of Pologi “Rayon” (1972).....	376
Map of Pologi City (2000).....	377
List of People.....	378
Mennonite Businesses.....	382
Pictures of People.....	383
Business Pictures.....	384
Sources.....	385

## HISTORY OF POLOGI

Pologi was likely founded in the middle of the nineteenth century as a workers' settlement during construction of railway lines in the region. It is situated on the Zaporozhye-Berdyansk line as well as on a north-south railway. It is on the Konka River, and 30 km north of the eastern Molotschna, 60 km northeast of Halbstadt and 30 km east-southeast of Orechov. Pologi is capital of the Pologi Rayon (Region), part of the Zaporozhye Oblast. In 1989 the population was 24,300.

There is a record of a Mennonite birth in Pologi as early as 1869, although the major influx of Mennonites was early in the twentieth century, principally 1900-1910. There were at least two, probably three Mennonite owned flour mills in the city, the Albrecht, Bergen and Rempel, and Rempel-Unger-Dick mills. Johann Jakob Quiring, a mill builder, lived in Pologi probably 1900-1909, and likely constructed some of these mills. At least three Mennonite young men took a bookkeeping course in Pologi in 1909; this could have meant the existence of a vocational or business school in Pologi. The Mennonite community in the city remained small; there is no record of a church or school, or even a minister. Despite the fact that some of the people came from the Chortitza and Yazykovo colonies, most of the religious connections seem to have been to the neighbouring Molotschna. There is a record of a Mennonite birth in 1924, so some Mennonites must have stayed there until at least then. The Teachers College in Halbstadt (Molochansk) had an outing to Pologi near the end of the school term in June of 1923. There must have been something really worthwhile to go to, since they got up at 4 AM to go on this 60 km excursion.

From 1928-1937 the city was called Chubarevka, but when it received city status in 1938 it reverted to Pologi. It is a railway junction, and many of the enterprises served the railway. There was a building materials plant, a feed factory, an oil extraction plant and a metal stamping plant.

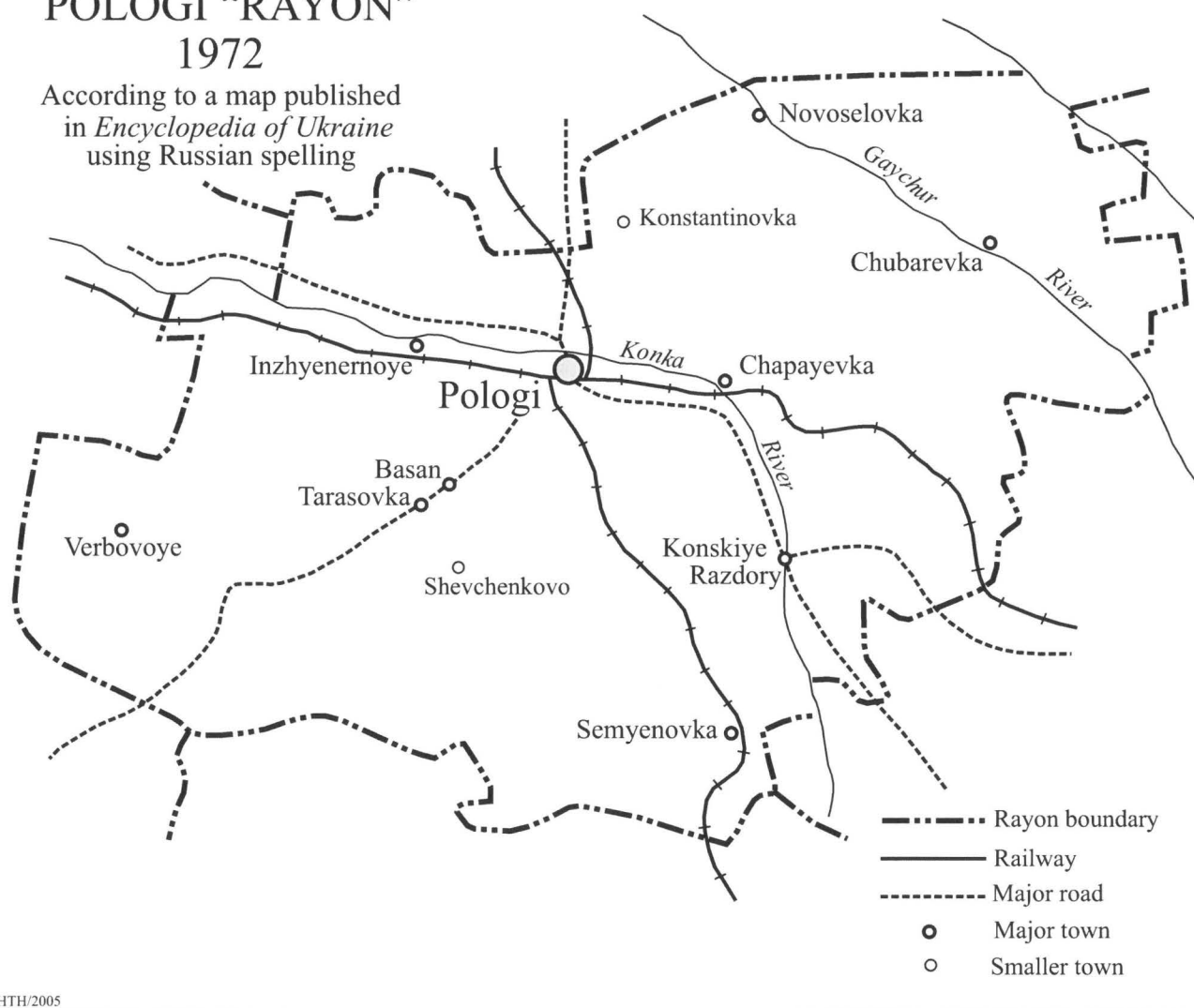
For Russia World War II started when Germany invaded 22 June 1941. When Mennonite men were being arrested and deported just prior to the Molotschna being overrun by the German forces in September of 1941, many were first marched the 30-60 km distance to Pologi, where they were put on trains and transported further north or east.

Current enterprises in Pologi are the "Pologi Oil Extraction Plant," which processes 1,250 tons of sunflower seeds in one day, and "Dneprokerarnika Ltd." which manufactures and sells sanitary ceramic supplies.

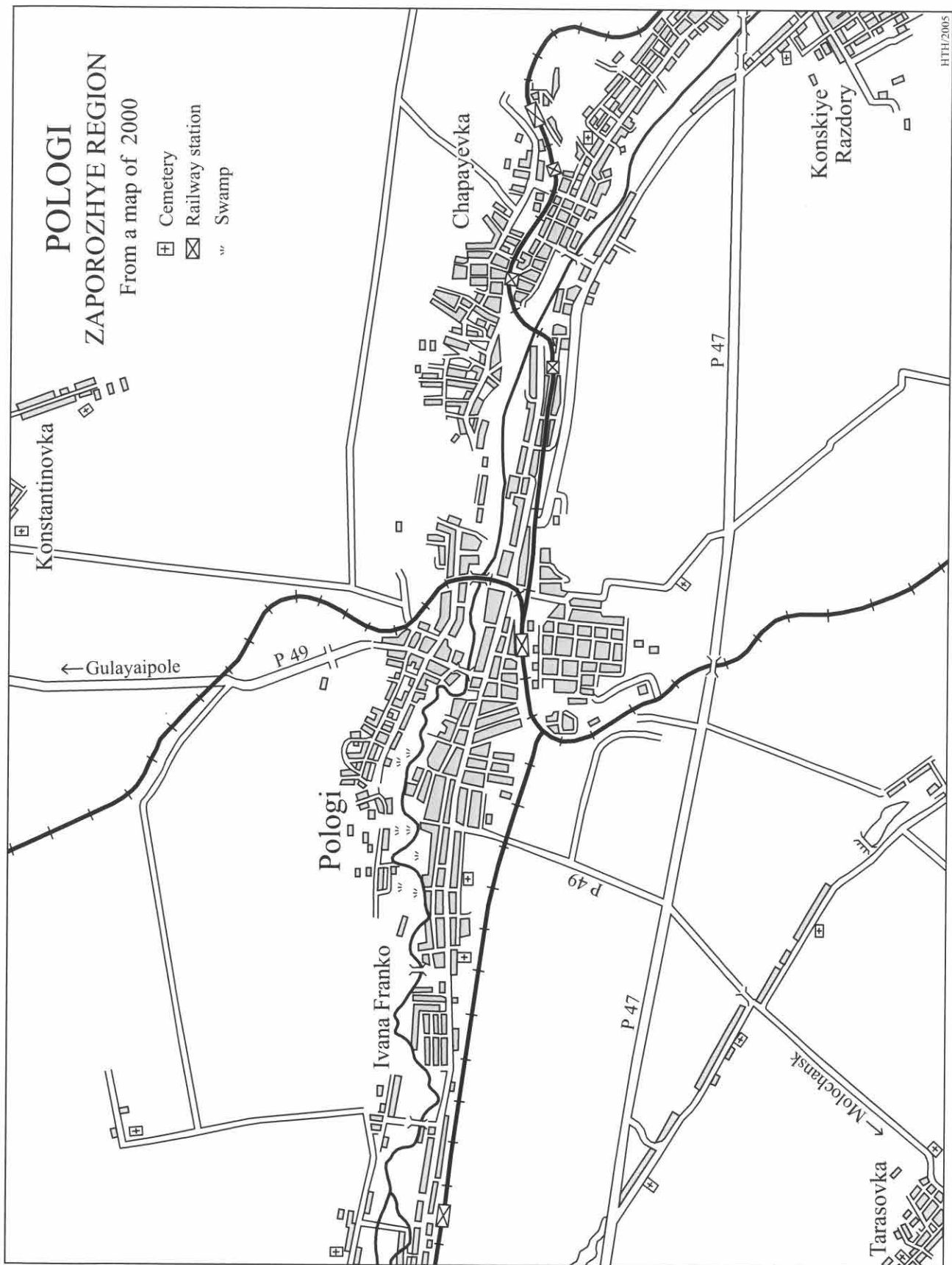
Nothing is known about remaining Mennonite buildings in the city

# POLOGI "RAYON" 1972

According to a map published  
in *Encyclopedia of Ukraine*  
using Russian spelling



HTH/2005





## LIST OF PEOPLE

(People who at one time lived in Pologi)  
(Each name will appear in **bold** print only once)

Specific records have been found of 68 Mennonites living in Pologi, mostly involved in the milling industry

### **Albrecht, Abram Abram**

Formerly of Pologi, by 1922 living in Berdyansk  
Requested food draft through the *Mennonitische Rundschau* 7 June 1922  
Address: Strasse Gogolevskaya No 26, Berdyansk  
Looking for Peter Loewen

### **Albrecht, Peter**

Wife **Maria Dueck**

The Albrechts actually lived on the 1,000 dessiatine Ebenfeld Estate in the Pologi municipality, but owned a large mill in Pologi

Children:

**Peter** - born 1911 in Pologi, moved with the family to Halbstadt, Berdyansk, Hamberg, then to Canada in 1925, married Aganetha (Nettie), no children of their own, but adopted 3 girls, Peter died in Edmonton about 2002, Nettie is still alive (2005)

**Abram** - born 30 May 1912 in Pologi, moved with the family to Halbstadt, Berdyansk, Hamberg, then to Canada in 1925, married Aganeta Thiessen 4 February 1967  
Abram died 23 February 1993 in Winnipeg, Manitoba

**Heinrich** - born 25 September 1913 in Pologi, moved with the family to Halbstadt, Berdyansk, Hamberg, then to Canada in 1925, married Margaretha, one son Daniel born about 1959, who was killed in a truck accident in 1972, Margaretha died about 2001,  
Heinrich is still living in Winnipeg (2005)

1917 the family moved to Halbstadt, Molotschna, then in 1920 to Berdyansk, then back to the Molotschna in Hamberg

September 1925 they immigrated to Canada, at first staying on a farm in Starbuck, Manitoba, then in the spring of 1926 they moved to Winnipeg

Father Peter died in 1952, Maria in 1965

### **Bergen, Gerhard Gerhard**

Born 30 September 1870, possibly in Neuendorf, Chortitza Colony

Parents Gerhard Bergen and Katharina Froese

Married **Katharina Gerhard Rempel** 27 February 1893

She was born 29 January 1872 in Adelsheim, Yazykovo

Parents Gerhard Rempel and Helena Buhler

Gerhard was partner with Heinrich H Rempel, owning a steam-powered flour mill in Pologi, and also later owned a mill in Tambovka

Children:

Elisabeth ?

Helena ?

**Gerhard** - born 12 December 1893, died in government military service about 1919

**Katharina** - born 25 July 1895

**Johann** - born 19 May 1898 in Adelsheim, Yazykovo, married Maria Buhler, 7 children, the first of which was born in Tambovka, the others all in Canada, immigrated to Canada in October 1926, settling in Drake, Saskatchewan, Johann died 25 January 1985, Maria 29 November 1985, both in Drake

**Jakob** - born 29 March 1899, died in government military service about 1919

**Cornelius** - born 13 November 1899, married Helena Janzen 22 October 1922, 12 children, the eldest 3 born in Russia, immigrated to Drake, Saskatchewan in 1926

**Isaak** - born 2 October 1901, married Helena Bueckert 24 June 1924, she was born 1903, 1 son, Abram born in 1925, immigrated to Drake, Saskatchewan October 1926, had another 4 children, moved to Winnipegosis in 1931 with brother Abraham, wife Helena died 16 March 1933, married Gertruda Delesky 20 August 1933, had another 5 children, elected as deacon of the Nordheimer Mennonite Church in 1940, died 20 November 1970

**Abraham** - born 27 April 1903, lived in Pologi until parents moved to Tambovka, 1926 he immigrated to Drake, Saskatchewan, with brother Isaak moved to Winnipegosis, Manitoba in 1931, ordained as minister of the Nordheim Mennonite Church in 1934, married Maria Janzen in 1934, 9 children, died 15 September 1965 in Winnipegosis, funeral 19 September with many people attending

**Peter** - born 6 December 1904, died 21 June 1905

**Peter** - born 27 August 1906, died 9 May 1909

**Heinrich** - born 1 October 1911

Gerhard and Katharina probably lived in Adelsheim, Yazykovo until at least 1898

Not sure when they moved to Pologi

Moved to Tambovka, a new settlement, in 1914, where Gerhard also owned a mill

Lost their entire fortune during the Revolution, but were much more saddened by the deaths of their 2 sons eight months apart, in government military service, about 1919 (White Army ?)

They immigrated to Drake, Saskatchewan in October 1926, together with single sons Abraham and Heinrich

At the same time married sons Johann, Cornelius, and Isaak with wives and children also immigrated, also settling in Drake

Moved to Fork River, Manitoba in 1933, then back to Drake in the autumn of 1947

Gerhard died in Drake 15 November 1947

Katharina died in May 1948, also in Drake

### **Bergen, Kornelius**

One of at least 6 people who took a bookkeeping course in Pologi in 1909

### **Dick, Mr**

Partner with Mr Rempel and Mr Unger, owning a steam-powered flour mill

**Friesen, D**

Contributed 100 rubles for the *Bethania Heilanstalt* in October 1911

**Janzen, Johann**

Wife **Mrs Janzen**

At least **6 children**, at least 5 of which were boys, in 1911 aged about 2-10 years

The Janzens lived in or near Pologi, could have been estate owners living near Pologi

They owned a car in 1910 and 1911, were therefore likely fairly wealthy

**Kliewer, Mr**

Wife **Mrs Kliewer**

Daughter **Dora** born in Pologi 25 May 1902

Dora married a Mr Martens

**Loepp, Abram**

Wife **Mrs Loepp**

**4 children**

Refugees arrived in Rosthern, Saskatchewan 28 October 1925

**Martens, Mr**

Wife **Mrs Martens**

Daughter **Anna** born in Pologi 25 January 1924

**Neufeld, H**

Contributed 3 rubles to a memorial fund, helping establish a bursary in honour of Minister

Abraham Goerz

**Quiring, Johann Jakob**

Born 7 August 1871 in Franzfeld, Yazykovo

Parents Jakob Quiring and Sara Buhr

Married **Katharina Peters**

She was born 20 September 1873 in Kronsweide, Chortitza

Parents Peter Peters and Maria Janzen

Quirings had 11 children, the first 7 of which probably lived in Pologi, fifth child Katharina is specifically recorded as having been born in Pologi, eighth child Johann was born in Franzfeld in 1909, so they must have left Pologi by then

Children:

**Jakob** - born 1899, died in 1920

**Sarah** - born 1900

**Maria** - born 1901

**Peter** - born 1903, died "young"

**Katharina** - born 24 February 1905 in Pologi, married Cornelius Epp, she died in Munich, Bavaria in 1945

**Johann** - born 1906, died as an infant

**Susanna** - born 1907, died about 1960 in Brazil

Johann - born 25 September 1909 in Franzfeld, Yazykovo, married Maria Siemens  
25 September 1929, 4 children born in Zaporozhye, Johann died in Siberia,  
Maria died 1993 in Churitiba, Brazil

Peter - born 1910, died in South Russia of starvation

Heinrich - born about 1912, died about 1920 in South Russia

David - born about 1913, died as an infant

Father Johann Quiring was first a landholder, apparently on a grand scale, then later became a steam-powered flour mill builder; he built, then sold, three of them. Presumably he built at least one mill in Pologi

After World War II, via Germany, he immigrated to Brazil with 2 daughters, definitely Susanna, and either Sarah or Maria

Johann died 15 June 1965 in Brazil, at the age of 94

**Rempel, Abram**

One of at least 6 people who took a bookkeeping course in Pologi in 1909

**Rempel, Heinrich H**

Partner with Gerhard G Bergen, owning a steam-powered flour mill

**Rempel, Mr**

Partner with Mr Dick and Mr Unger, owning a steam-powered flour mill

**Unger, Mr**

Partner with Mr Dick and Mr Rempel, owning a steam powered flour mill

**Unruh, Mr**

Wife **Mrs Unruh**

Daughter **Anna** - born 28 August 1869 in Pologi

Anna married **Jakob Kornelsen**

Jakob was born 11 June 1870

They had one daughter **Anna** born 14 August 1909 in Pologi

She married Jakob J Martens, lived in Mariental, Molotschna, 3 children,

Jakob Kornelsen died 14 January 1935 in Mariental

Anna married Wilhelm Bachman, had 2 more children

Anna died 7 November 1943 in Prussia, while on the "Great Trek"

**Wall, Heinrich Heinrich**

Born 1 Aug 1875 in Nieder-Chortitza, Chortitza

Parents Heinrich Wall and Helena Friesen

Married **Paulina Gutjahr** 23 October 1903

She was born 21 February 1882

Parents Johann Gutjahr and Mathilda Schmidt

Children:

**Paulina** - born 3 August 1904

**Helena** - born 28 August 1905

**Olga** - born 27 December 1910 in Pologi, died 18 November 1915 in Nieder-Chortitza

Heinrich - born 23 May 1918 in Nieder-Chortitza

Parents Heinrich and Paulina therefore definitely lived in Pologi when Olga was born

Children Paulina and Helena may also probably born there

They moved to Nieder-Chortitza by the time Olga died in 1915

Mother Paulina died in Nieder-Chortitza 1 February 1920

Heinrich then married Helena Mantler 18 July 1920

Children:

Katharina - born 13 May 1921 in Nieder-Chortitza, died 6 October 1922 in  
Nieder-Chortitza

Wife Helena died 7 May 1923

Heinrich married Maria Sawatsky 27 October 1923

Heinrich died 20 August 1931 in Osterwick, Chortitza

**Wiebe, Heinrich**

One of at least 6 people who took a bookkeeping course in Pologi in 1909

**Woelk, Katharina**

**Woelk, Aganetha**

Refugees who arrived in Rosthern, Saskatchewan 28 October 1925

## **MENNONITE BUSINESSES**

**Albrecht Mill**

Owned by Peter Albrecht

The Albrechts had a child born in Pologi in 1912, so they certainly lived there at that time

Apparently the best known Mennonite mill in Pologi

**Bergen and Rempel Mill**

Steam-powered flour mill

Owned by Gerhard G Bergen and Heinrich H Rempel

**Quiring, Johann Jakob**

Originally a landowner, but then became a mill builder

Said to have built 3 mills, likely some or all of the ones mentioned for Pologi

**Rempel, Unger and Dick Mill**

Steam-powered flour mill

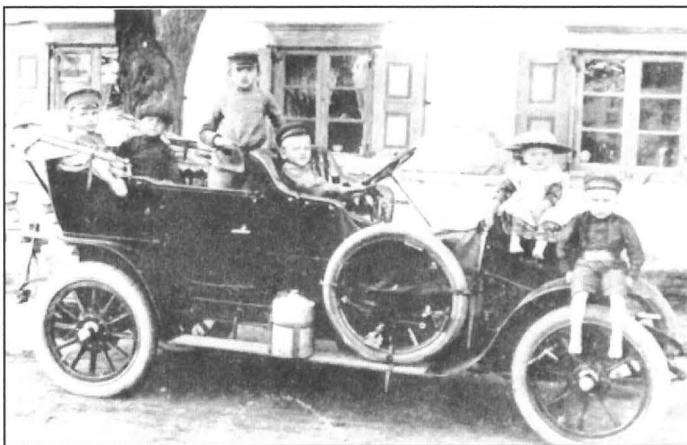
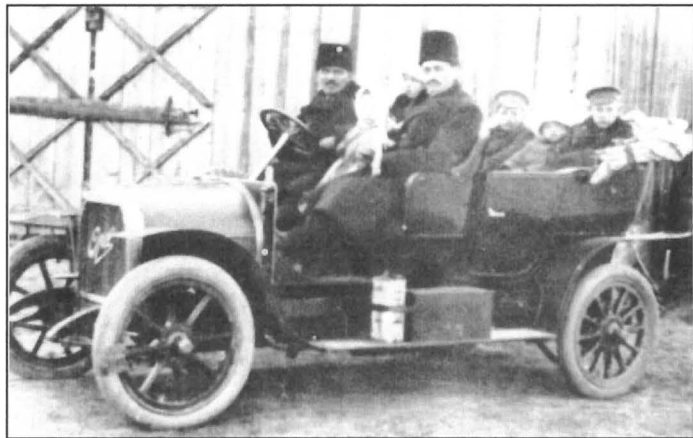
Owned by Mr Rempel, Mr Unger and Mr Dick

*Forstei* tax assessment 12,000 rubles in 1908

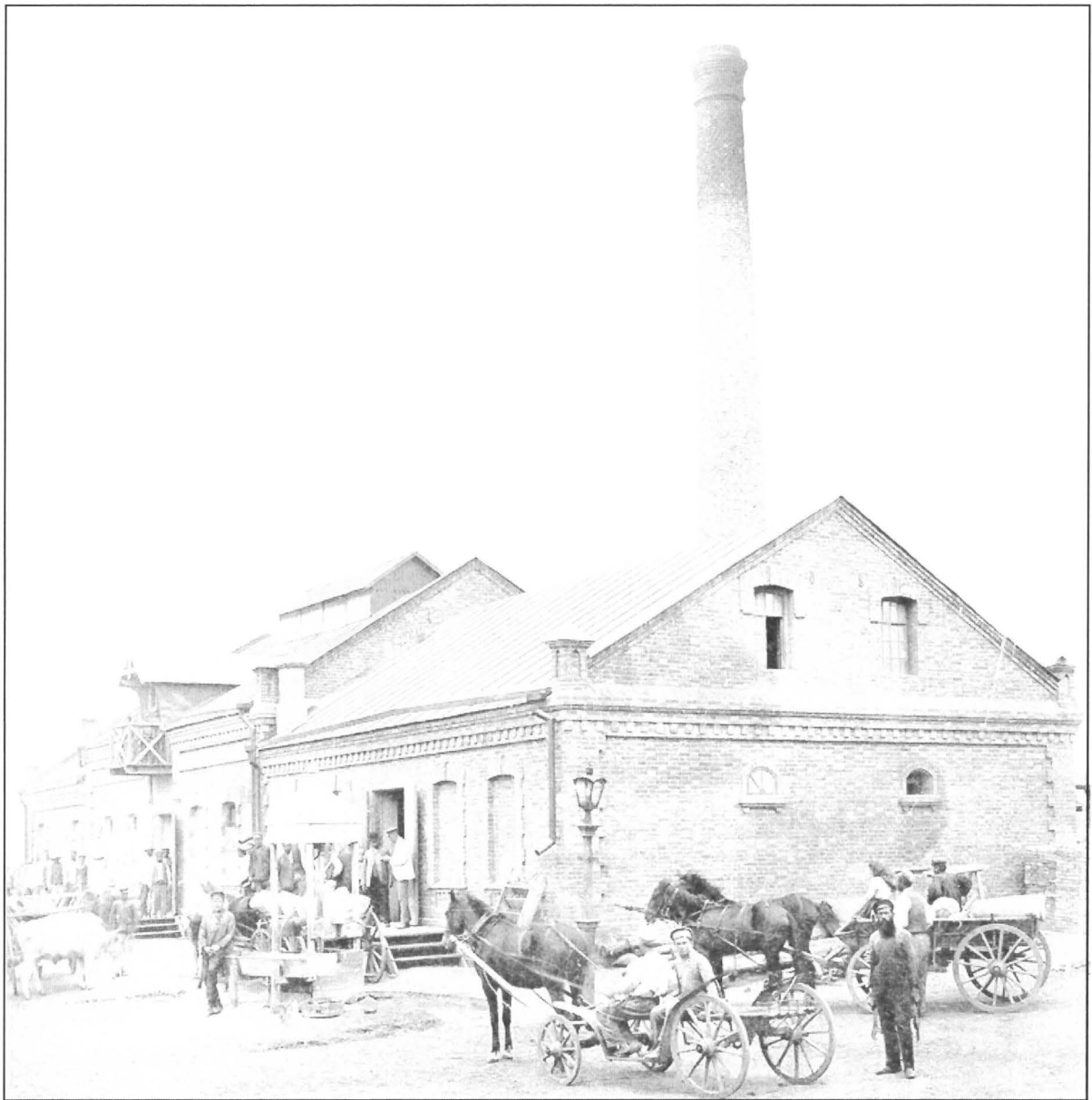


Men taking bookkeeping course in 1909. L-r first three unknown, then Heinrich Wiebe, Abram Rempel and Cornelius Bergen

Johann Janzen, from the vicinity of Pologi, at the wheel of his car, with teacher Peter Schellenberg, 1910



Automobile belonging to Johann Janzen, likely with his children, 1911



Steam-powered flour mill owned by Gerhard G Bergen and Heinrich H Rempel



**SOURCES**  
(for the entire Pologi chapter)

Albrecht, Heinrich (Henry) P, of Winnipeg, Manitoba, personal interview

*Bibel und Pflug*

Obituary: Quiring, Johann Jakob, 1 July 1965

*Cities and Villages of Ukraine*, Kiev, 1970, pp 569-575

*Der Bote*

Obituaries:

Bergen, Gerhard G, 3 December 1947, p 6

Bergen, Katharina (nee Rempel), 26 May 1948, p 6

Bergen, Isaak (deacon), 29 December 1970, p 11

*Der Botschafter*

List of contributors to the *Bethania Heilanstalt*, 28 February 1912, p 3

*Encyclopedia of Ukraine*, University of Toronto Press Incorporated, Toronto, 1993

Epp, George K, "Urban Mennonites in Russia," a chapter in the book *Mennonites in Russia*, edited by John Friesen, CMBC Publications, Winnipeg, Canada, 1989, pp 242, 250

EWZ Lists: Mennonite extracts

Huebert, Helmut T, *Hierschau: An Example of Russian Mennonite Life*, Springfield Publishers, Winnipeg, Canada, 1986, p 171

Huebert, Helmut T, *Molotschna Historical Atlas*, Springfield Publishers, Winnipeg, Canada, 2003, pp 103, 107

*Jahresbericht des Bevollmaechtigten der Mennonitengemeinden in Russland in Sachen der Unterhaltung des Forstkommandos im Jahre 1908*, p 30

Lohrenz, Gerhard, *Heritage Remembered*, CMBC Publications, Winnipeg, Canada, 1974, pp 170, 197

*Mennonitische Rundschau*

Food Draft List:

7 June 1922, p 4

Obituaries:

Bergen, Abram G (minister), 22-29 December 1965, p 11

Refugee Lists:

Arrivals in Canada for October 1926, 20 April 1927, p 20

Quiring, Walter and Bartel, Helen, *Als Ihre Zeit Erfuellt War: 150 Jahre Bewaehrung in Russland*, Saskatoon, Canada, 1963, p 37

Schroeder, William and Huebert, Helmut T, *Mennonite Historical Atlas*, Springfield Publishers, Second Edition, Winnipeg, Canada, 1996, pp 48, 63

# Chapter VII

## SEVASTOPOL

### TABLE OF CONTENTS

Table of Contents.....	386
History of Sevastopol.....	387
Pictures of Sevastopol.....	389
Map of Sevastopol (2000).....	390
The Crimean War.....	391
List of People.....	393
Institutions and Businesses.....	395
Peter Martinovitch Friesen (1849-1914).....	396
Sources.....	406

## HISTORY OF SEVASTOPOL

Sevastopol is near the site of the ancient Greek colony of Chersonesus, founded in 421 BC as a democratic city state. It was the most important Greek colony in the Crimea until Scythians overran the region and forced it to become a protectorate of King Mithradates VI. This lasted from 179 to 63 BC. In the first century AD the region became part of the Roman Empire and in the fourth century was renamed Korsun, being part of the Byzantine Empire.

In the Middle Ages Korsun was a large trading and political centre, playing an important role in the economic and cultural life of the region. It was a Genoese trade colony until it was destroyed in 1399 by a Tatar invasion.

The modern city of Sevastopol was founded as a city and port by Catherine II on the site of the Tatar village of Akhtiar after the Crimea was annexed by Russia in 1783. It was strongly fortified and in 1804 became the chief base of the Russian Black Sea Fleet. Between 1797 and 1826 the settlement actually reverted back to its original Tatar name of Akhtiar.



Chersonesus - ruins of a church



Sevastopol Crest

In the 1820s and 1830s young Mennonite entrepreneurs such as Johann Cornies loaded up produce from the Molotschna and headed south to the Crimea to sell their goods. Sevastopol was one of the cities on this circuit. They would then buy manufactured goods in the cities and take them back to the colonies.

In the Crimean War (1853-1856) Sevastopol was besieged by British, French, Turkish and Sardinian troops. The Russian resistance held out for 349 days, the hero of the land defense being General E I Totleben. The Russian fleet was scuttled by the Russians themselves to block the entrance to the harbour. One of the naval heroes of the war was Admiral Paul Nakhimov, commander of the Russian navy on the Black Sea. In 1853 he had destroyed the Turkish squadron at Sinop. He was killed in the siege of the city in 1855. Leo Tolstoy recorded the heroic efforts of the defenders in "The Tales of Sevastopol." He himself fought in the ranks of the besieged. The French successfully stormed the fortress of Malakhov on the south shore of the bay in September of 1855, and three days later the Russians abandoned the city.

After the cessation of hostilities the terms of peace were signed in Paris on 30 March 1856. Sevastopol declined in importance as a military base and its fortifications were dismantled. With

repeated conflicts in the area, however, fortifications were rebuilt after 1871, and in 1890 Sevastopol again became a chief naval base.

Starting in the mid 1800s Russia was starting to develop an extensive rail system. They tended to emphasize the regions where commodities could then easily be transported to ports. Sevastopol came into this category. The Kursk-Kharkov-Sevastopol Railway was completed by 1875. Two types of locomotives were developed specifically for this line.

In the Russo-Japanese War of 1904-1905, most battles were won by the Japanese, with a particularly significant defeat of the Russian Navy in the Battle of Tsushima Straits in 1905. For no logical reason at all, the Jews were blamed for these defeats, so as a result pogroms broke out in many cities, with Jews being killed and their property destroyed. Such a pogrom was being incited in Sevastopol on 21 October 1905. Peter M Friesen left his sick bed, went to the market place where the mob was collecting and stepped onto a vehicle in the middle of the crowd. He pled for his fellow citizens to show love as Christians. The crowd miraculously dispersed.

The Sevastopol sailors mutinied during the 1905 uprisings. Sailors from the Black Sea fleet went ashore in 1918 and terrorized districts as far north as the Molotschna Mennonite Colony. In 1920 General Peter N Wrangel had his headquarters in the city in the last stand of the White Army against the Communists. With the Red Army closing in, he left Sevastopol aboard the cruiser *General Kornilov* on 14 November; in all, 146,000 people were evacuated to Constantinople.

There never was a great Mennonite presence in Sevastopol, although Peter M Friesen lived there for 13 years (1898-1911). In 1902, in addition to his own family, Friesen indicated that they had 17 boarders in their house. Most of these were students in secondary schools, teacher training schools and nursing schools. For a time, 1904 to 1910, there was an officially organized Mennonite church in Sevastopol. The "Sevastopol Evangelical Mennonite Brotherhood." The establishment of this group was at the initiative of Friesen, and they also met in the Friesen home.

Friesen was also involved in political developments. He was one of the principal movers behind the "Union of Freedom, Truth and Peace" Party which was organized shortly after the October Manifesto of 1905, and was sometimes referred to as the "Friesen Party." The Kadet Party, also interested in reform, had a Sevastopol central committee. By many Sevastopol was considered to be the centre of sectarian activity.

During World War II Sevastopol was again besieged, this time by invading land-based German and Romanian armies. It fell on 3 July 1942 after eight months of resistance, during which time the city was virtually reduced to rubble. After it was recaptured by the Red Army on 9 May 1944, reconstruction began. Sevastopol was one of nine cities named "Hero City" of the Soviet Union because of the staunch resistance it had displayed against the invaders.

In 1954 the whole Crimea, including Sevastopol, was transferred to the Ukrainian SSR, then it became part of the independent Ukraine in 1991. In 1995 an agreement was implemented in which four-fifths of the Russian Black Sea Fleet would remain under Russian control, and in 1997 a further agreement allowed Russia to base its fleet at Sevastopol for the next 20 years.

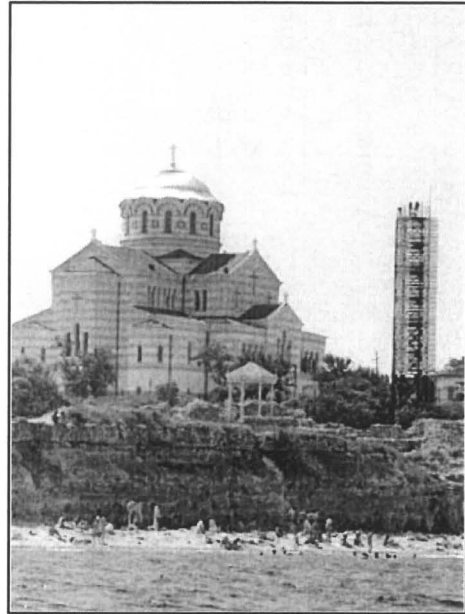
Sevastopol is a port and a major naval base. The harbour has been given over to the navy, which controls the Black Sea and the Bosphorus, so commercial vessels no longer use the deep sea natural harbour. Industries include ship building, lumber milling, food processing and manufacture of bricks and furniture. It is also a popular tourist destination, especially for people from the CIS. A panorama, created by Franz Roubaud, depicting scenes from the Crimean War, was restored after

World War II, and is a site frequently visited by tourists who are interested in history.

In 2004 the population of Sevastopol was 328,600, area was 864 square kilometres, and the geographic coordinates 44° 36 N and 33° 31 E. Elevation within the city is up to 100 metres. While the Crimea has mild temperatures, in winter there can be snow in Sevastopol.



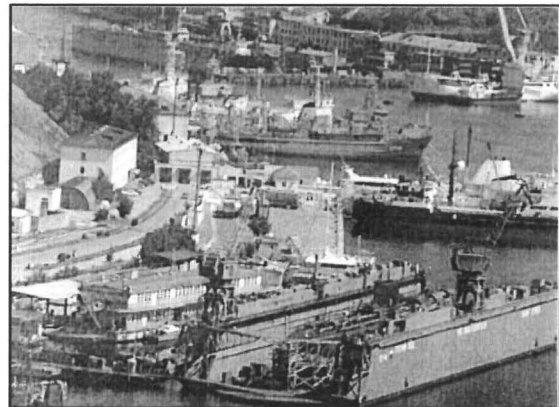
View of Artillery Bay from Cape Khrustalny



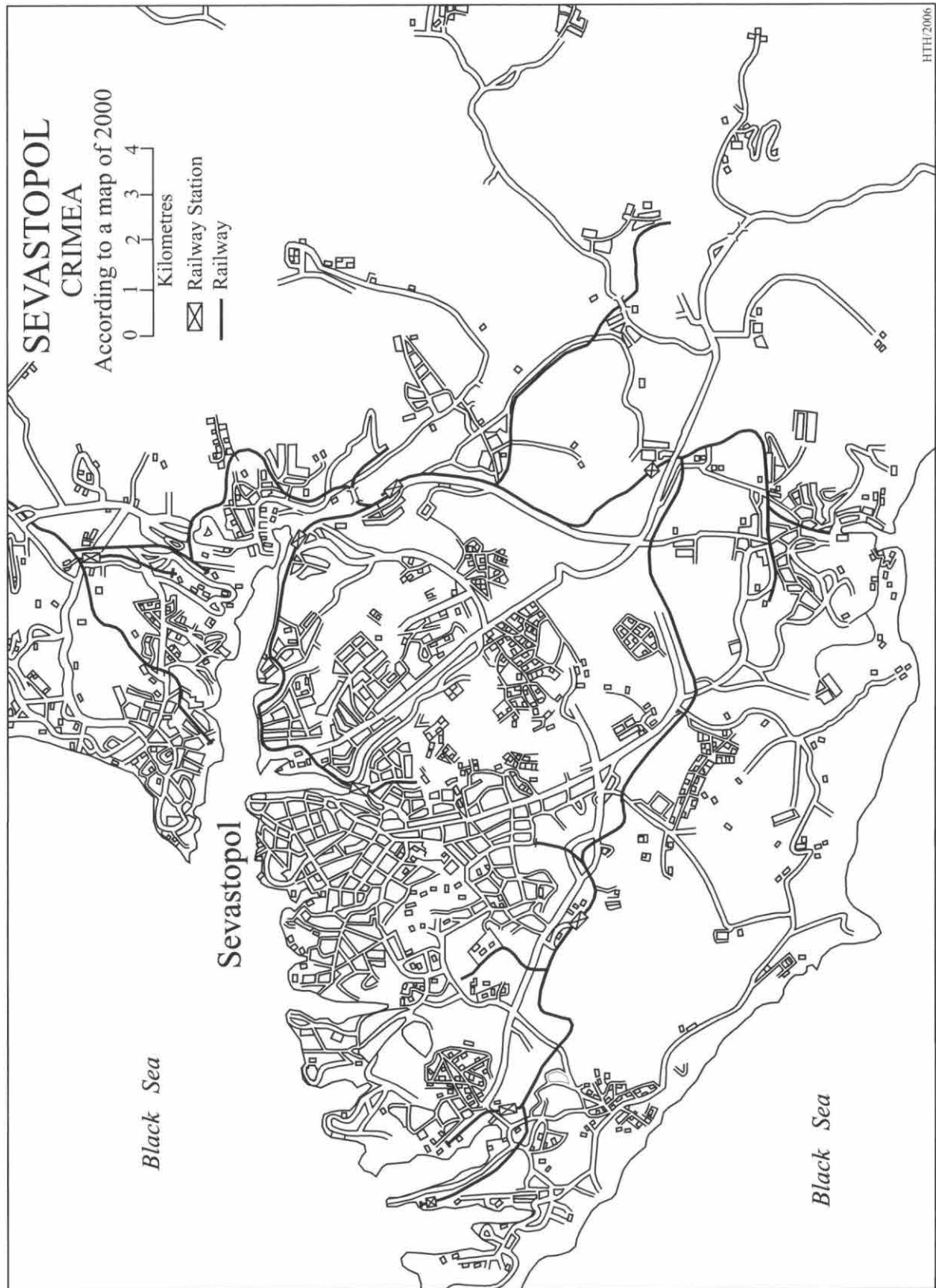
St Vladimir Cathedral



Russian Navy Day July 2005



Naval installations, Southern Bay

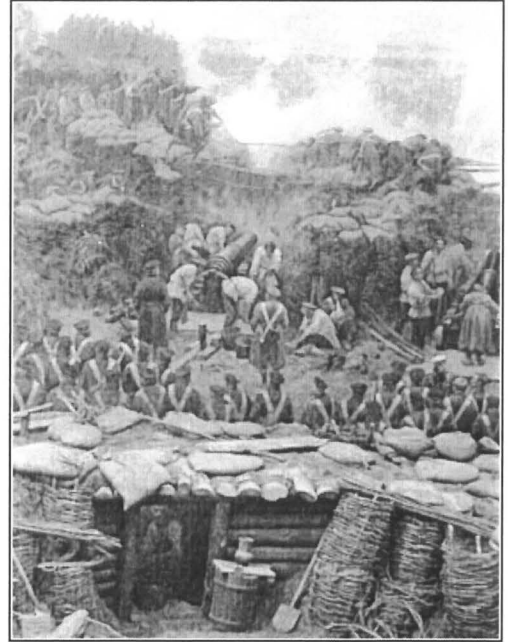




## Crimean War



Museum of Panorama "Defense of Sevastopol  
1854-1855"



Panorama "Defense of Sevastopol  
1854-1855"



Panorama "Defense of Sevastopol in 1854-1855"



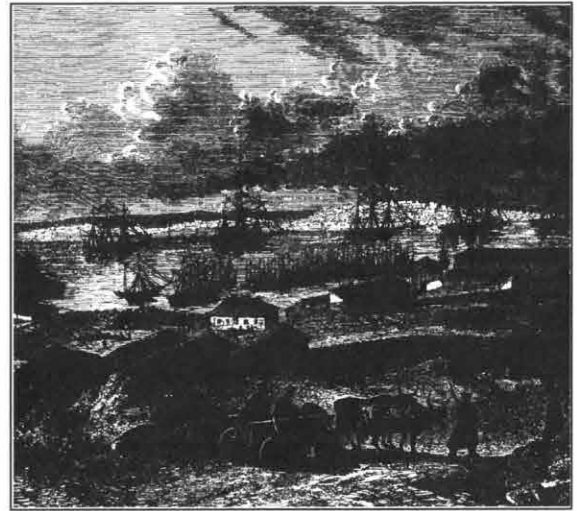
Storming of the Fortress of Malakhov  
8 September 1855



## Crimean War



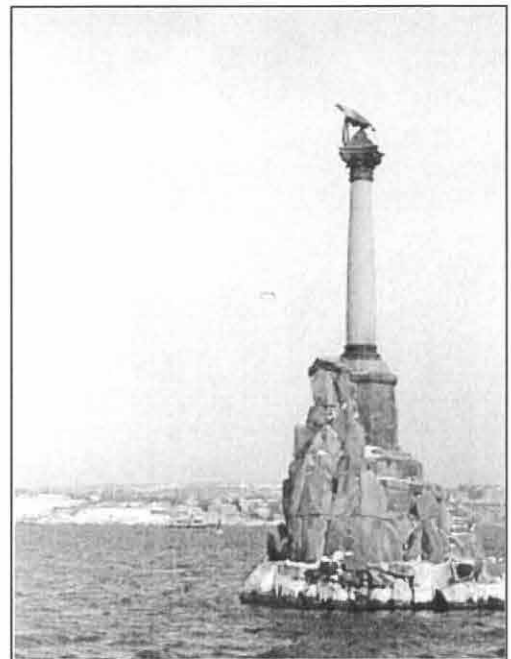
Monument to Admiral Paul Nakhimov



Sevastopol harbour during the Crimean War



Monument to General E I Totleben



Monument to Scuttled Ships

## LIST OF PEOPLE

(People who at one time lived in Sevastopol)  
(Each name will appear in **bold** print only once)

In all, 28 Mennonites are recorded as having lived or stayed in Sevastopol, by far the best known being Johann Cornies, and of course historian P M Friesen.

### **Cornies, Johann**

As a young man, in the 1820s, while living in the Molotschna, he packed his wagon with hams, sausages, lard, butter and eggs, and headed for the Crimea, where he visited Feodosia, Simferopol and Sevastopol to sell his goods

### **Friesen, Peter Martin (Martinovitch)**

(see separate biography)

Born 20 April 1849 in Sparrau, Molotschna

Parents Martin Jakob Friesen and Helena Klassen

The family owned a small farm, a treadmill, and his father built wooden mills

Martin was the fifth of seven children

He was a student of Isaak Peters in *Dorfschule* in Sparrau, student of P J Neufeld at the Steinbach Estate

Teachers in Halbstadt *Zentralschule* were Unruh and Molyarov

Studied in Switzerland 2-3 years, then Odessa, followed by Moscow for a year

1873 appointed teacher at the Halbstadt *Zentralschule*

1874 achieved State Elementary School Certificate in Odessa

Continued teaching at the *Zentralschule* in Halbstadt, being principal 1880-1886

Married **Susanna Fast** 1 September 1873

Her parents were Johann and Susanna Fast

Children:

**Susanna** - born 1874 in Halbstadt

Agatha - born 1878, died of rheumatic fever at age 16, in 1894 in Odessa

Johann (Haenschen) - born 1881 or 1882, died age 2 of diphtheria

**Olga** - born 1885

**Paul** - born about 1887, served in *Sanitaetsdienst*

Dima - born about 1888, died of whooping cough age 3 in Odessa

September 1886 to June 1888 lived in Wohldemfuerst, Kuban

1888 to March 1896 lived in Odessa

1896 to 1898 recuperated on Estate Mailschokrak of friend Peter Heese

1898 to 1911 lived in Sevastopol, lived on his "independent means"

Household large, 3 children, a **niece**, a number of **foster children**, one named **Caroline**;

in 1902 had 17 boarders, mostly students in various phases of their education

Organized a house church, which officially existed 1904-1910

Involved on political organizations:

Own party, "Union of Freedom, Truth and Peace" called the "Frizen Party"

Also for a time joined the Kadet Party

In the meantime writing a history of the Mennonite Brethren Church, finally published by Raduga in 1911

Involved in Inter-Mennonite organizations, was a member of the *KfK*

Moved to Tiege, Molotschna in 1911

Died 19 October 1914 in Tiege

### **Janzen, J D**

Born 1874 in Gnadenfeld, Molotschna

*Zentralschule* in Gnadenfeld

Teacher on an estate at age 17

Two years later teacher in Franzthal, where he stayed until 1905, learned accounting during the summer holidays

Moved to Karassan, Crimea, accountant for a retail store

Established his own bookstore, and later wood and metal works

Chairman of the board which established Karassan *Zentralschule* and *Maedchenschule*

Also was a teacher in the *Maedchenschule*

1918 moved to Sevastopol, where he was a broker for a trading company which dealt in foreign countries

1924 immigrated to Mexico, then in 1926 to Aldergrove, BC, where he died

### **Students**

**Seventeen students** boarded at the P M Friesen home in 1902

Students at:

Secondary Schools

Teacher Training School

Nursing School

### **Vogt, Abram**

Involved in a shoot-out in which 2 men were killed

Sentenced to death, awaiting execution in jail in Sevastopol in 1907

Peter M Friesen called to administer the Lord's Supper to him on the last night

Vogt was ready to embrace forgiveness and celebrated the Lord's supper with Friesen

Vogt asked Friesen to write a letter to his mother, which he did

The prisoner was hanged later that night

## **MENNONITE AND OTHER INSTITUTIONS AND BUSINESS**

### **Sevastopol Evangelical Mennonite Brotherhood**

Founded in 1904 at the initiative of P M Friesen

Ecumenical, open to all

20 persons met regularly for the Sunday worship service, with monthly celebration of the Lord's Supper

8 of the worshippers were church members (presumably meaning in some other established church congregation)

Closed in 1910; the ecclesiastical circumstances had changed, members had moved away, Friesen's health was failing, Friesens moved from their house, which had been the officially registered meeting place

Continued to function as a house church, at least until the Friesens left in 1911

### **Union of Freedom, Truth and Peace: Foes of all Violence, Proponents of Unceasing Civil, Economic and Moral-Spiritual Progress Party**

Organized by P M Friesen

Other Evangelicals were also members, such as I S Prokhanov and Odinstov.

Referred to as the "Frizen Party"

Sevastopol was the permanent location of the Central Bureau of the party

Original mandate was accepted late October or early November 1905

Friesen and another Mennonite Johann Isaak were among the original seven signatories

Mandate was radicalized on 28 November 1905, calling for a constitutional monarchy, single chamber parliament to enact all laws, universal suffrage, progressive labour legislation, universal free education for children, elimination of poverty, provision of land at just prices to the peasants, freedom of conscience, speech and assembly, removal of privileged status for any religion

Did not survive beyond 1906, fielded no candidates in the Duma elections

### **Schools attended by Mennonites**

*Mittel* and *Zentralschule* and likely *Gymnasium*

Teacher Training School

Nursing School

In 1902 there were 17 boarders at the P M Friesen home, students in these various institutions

### **J D Janzen**

Originally a teacher, then turned to business in Karassan, Crimea

1918 moved to Sevastopol, where he was a broker for a trading company, which dealt in foreign commodities

1924 immigrated to Mexico, then to Canada

## PETER MARTINOVITCH FRIESEN

(1849-1914)

### The Man Behind the History

By Abe J Dueck, Winnipeg

Peter Martinovitch Friesen was born 20 April 1849 in the small village of Sparrau in the Molotschna Colony. He was the fifth of seven children of Martin Jakob Friesen and Helena Klassen. His parents owned a small farm and also received additional income from the operation of a treadmill. His father was probably also a mill builder in Sparrau. Peter was a student of Isaak Peters in elementary school in Sparrau, then seemingly went to the Steinbach Estate where P J Neufeld was the teacher. His teachers in the Halbstadt *Zentralschule* were Kornelius Unruh and Mark Lukitsch Molyarov.

Peter's biographer, Franz Thiessen, states that the family's income was not sufficient to allow Peter to continue his education beyond the primary level. He surmises that if it had not been for several well-to-do men who saw the gifts of this young lad and gave the financial support, Friesen would never have achieved his status as an educator and writer. It seems more likely, however, that other factors than finances were more important in influencing him to pursue further studies.

Details of Friesen's religious development are not known, but several factors are clear. Friesen's mother was converted as a result of reading Ludwig Hofhaker's sermons. We are told that the family owned a copy of Jakob Denner's book, although it is unlikely that there was much other reading material of any kind in the home. Nothing is known about Friesen's father. However, given our knowledge of the religious unrest in the colony at the time and his mother's influence on him, it is not surprising that Friesen also felt the impact of the religious renewal movement and became converted at the age of fifteen or sixteen. He soon joined the Mennonite Brethren Church and was called upon to preach before long. By this time the June reforms had brought a degree of stability to the young church after the period referred to as the *Froehliche Richtung* (Exuberant Movement). Friesen indicates that he could not recall any trace of the *Froehliche Richtung*, which had brought such disrepute to the Brethren movement, when he joined the church.

Friesen embarked on a radically new course when he decided to pursue further education at various schools. This would take him outside of the context of the Mennonite communities of southern Russia. First he went to Switzerland with his friend Kornelius Unruh for two or three years, beginning about 1870. He may also have studied briefly in Odessa and spent most of the year 1872-1873 studying in Moscow, emphasizing the study of Russian language. While Friesen received encouragement and support from influential Mennonites to study abroad in preparation for a teaching career in the Mennonite community, there were also those who viewed this as a potentially serious threat to his faith. Fellow Mennonite Brethren sought to dissuade him, although without success. Thiessen speculates that Friesen was either excommunicated for his obstinacy or that he voluntarily left the church. In any case, he appears to have lost his earlier faith and essentially became a rationalist.

Whatever Friesen's own faith commitment was following his studies, he still had a strong sense of allegiance to the Mennonite community. In 1873 he was invited to join the teaching staff

at the Halbstadt secondary school. According to Peter Braun he received his teacher's certificate from Odessa in 1874. He continued at the Halbstadt school until 1886, serving as principal from 1880-1886. When he resigned, it was because he did not have the heart to dismiss a fellow teacher.

There is relatively little information available about Friesen's teaching career. Friesen promoted reforms, including better training in the Russian language, at a time of radical change in the educational system. He criticized the religious leaders for their control of the schools and advocated various improvements in the curriculum. It was under his leadership that pedagogical courses were introduced - the first such courses taught in the Mennonite colonies. During his last years as principal the school board was led by Peter Heese, a friend and former colleague of Friesen who became the owner of a large estate.

A number of significant events transpired in the meantime. One of these was his marriage to Susanna Fast on 1 September 1873. She was the daughter of Johann and Susanna Fast and the sister of an itinerant evangelist, also named Johann Fast. Children born to the couple were:

1. Susanna (Susie) - born in 1874 in Halbstadt. She later studied in Switzerland and Paris. She married Heinrich H Janzen, who was a teacher at the deaf mute school in Tiege.
2. Agatha - born in 1878. She died of rheumatic fever at the age of 16 in 1894 in Odessa.
3. Johann (Haenschen) - born 1881 or 1882. He was not to live long. He contracted diphtheria at the age of two and became deathly ill. This brought about a major crisis in Friesen's life. He pleaded with God to save his son's life and struggled deeply with the question of whether there was a God at all. When the child died, Friesen's doubts about God seemed confirmed. But after an intense struggle, Friesen recaptured his faith and was inwardly renewed.
4. Olga - born about 1885.



Susanna and Peter M Friesen  
and infant daughter

5. Paul - born about 1887, he served in the *Sanitaetsdienst* in 1914.

6. Dima - born about 1888, died of whooping cough at the age of three in Odessa.

After the death of Haenschen, and following Friesen's intense inner struggle, he was ordained to the ministry in the Mennonite Brethren Church and the following year he was asked to write the twenty-fifth anniversary history of the Mennonite Brethren Church.

For a brief period, September 1886 to June 1888, the Friesens lived in the Kuban at Wohldemfuerst. Little information is available regarding this period. Susanna Friesen became a member of the Mennonite Brethren Church during this time. Friesen visited many congregations and collected material pertaining to his history project. He also actively represented several congregations to the government officials and departments to secure permission to construct meeting (worship) houses. One case involved the Rueckenau congregation in the Molotschna, and another was the Spat congregation in the



Crimea, an affiliate of Rueckenau. Permission was granted for both buildings in 1887. Part of the problem that needed to be resolved to gain permission was the question of Mennonite Brethren identity - the authorities wanted to know whether the group was Baptist or Mennonite. This, of course, was an ongoing issue for Russian Mennonite Brethren.

In June 1888 the Friesens were on the move again, this time to Odessa where they resided until March 1896. Although there were some Mennonites in Odessa, Friesen's primary responsibility was to the Stundists and to German Baptists. He described himself as the pastor of a German Baptist congregation. In many ways this was a difficult period because of the suspicion of the Stundists and the extreme opposition toward them by the Orthodox Church. Stundism was a revival movement beginning in the Ukraine in the latter part of the nineteenth century, largely as the result of the influence of pietistic Mennonites and Lutherans. It essentially paralleled the beginnings of the Baptist movement in Russia, and often there were close linkages with Mennonite Brethren leaders.

In 1895 Friesen also spent some time ministering to both old Church (*Kirchliche*) and Mennonite Brethren in Sagraodovka. The main purpose seems to have involved representation to government on behalf of the Nikolaifeld Mennonite and the Tiege Mennonite Brethren churches. Both churches were closed by the officials in 1896, mainly because of suspicion of the brethren, but the decision was reversed in 1898.

By this time Friesen was experiencing serious health problems. According to a letter to the *Zionsbote*, the main reason why the Friesens left Odessa to spend two years on the estate of friend Peter Heese, at Mailschokrak, was to allow Friesen to recuperate. His doctors advised him not to engage in church work or to travel. However, according to Thiessen, a significant additional factor was the danger to which he was now exposed because of his advocacy of the Stundists. His wife and family had already moved in advance.

The time spent on the estate was a time of crisis, not only for Friesen himself, but also for his wife. Friesen compared his experience to Jonah's in the belly of a whale. Because of his illness, he feared that he would never again be able to work as before. Fortunately, Friesen was adequately provided for materially. Eventually a measure of health did return and for reasons of climate, schools and loneliness, the family moved to Sevastopol, a major seaport on the Black Sea, where they resided for the next thirteen years (1898 to 1911). Two daughters, Susanna and Olga, son Paul, and a niece who was residing with them, were preparing for exams at the time. Other boarders also resided with them, most of whom were at various stages in their educational careers - in secondary schools, teacher training schools or nursing schools. In 1902 Friesen indicated that there were seventeen boarders in addition to their own children and foster children. Friesen became very involved in counseling and advising the students, which created additional stress for him.

The number of Mennonites residing in Sevastopol was relatively small. A small house church of about 20 persons met regularly in the Friesen home for Sunday worship and monthly celebration of the Lord's Supper. Eight of these were church members. The Friesens also received visitors frequently, including vacationers who spent time at the local beach, ministers, missionaries from India and guests from various countries.

In 1907, while at Sevastopol, Friesen had an experience which made a deep impression on him. One day the local police informed him that he was to administer the Lord's Supper to a prison inmate. Friesen could only speculate that it must be a Mennonite who had been condemned to die -



otherwise such a call seemed unlikely. Late at night he was ushered into the prison and, true enough, it was a young man named Abram Vogt who had been involved in a shoot-out during which two men were killed. Vogt and his companions were sentenced to be hanged.

After telling his story, Vogt was ready to embrace forgiveness and Friesen offered to celebrate communion with him. After placing a small white cloth on a dirty prison table the two men celebrated together. Before Friesen departed Vogt asked him to write his mother, and inform her about what had happened, which Friesen subsequently did. Vogt was executed later that night. But for Friesen the incident was a sad commentary on the failure of the Mennonite community to live up to the ideals of the gospel.

Friesen continued his work on the history of the Mennonite Brethren Church and also spent time on a draft of the Confession of Faith published in 1902. He hoped that this document would also be accepted by the American Mennonite Brethren, as he indicated in a letter to John F Harms. Friesen was concerned in general about the distancing of American Mennonite Brethren from Russian Mennonite Brethren.

For a time there was an officially organized "Sevastopol Evangelical Mennonite Brotherhood." It was founded in 1904 and officially closed in 1910. The establishment of this congregation was entirely the initiative of Friesen, and he sent letters to Mennonite ministers and elders as well as to evangelical Baptist groups concerning the same. The church was an ecumenical venture and was open to "all those who believed in Jesus Christ and demonstrated a love of all the brethren in word and deed." This emphasis was in keeping with the *Allianz* spirit which Friesen had already manifested and which gave rise to a separate *Allianz* church. The Sevastopol congregation closed about six years later. Friesen stated that the reasons for its closure were that ecclesiastical circumstances had changed, members had moved away, Friesen's health was failing, and he was moving away from the house which was officially registered as the meeting place. A house congregation continued to function thereafter, at least until Friesen left in 1911.

Friesen by no means limited his activities to Mennonites. He had constant contacts with others, including the German Baptists and especially the Russian Baptists and Stundists. The Stundists regarded Friesen as someone who could help them achieve recognition by government authorities as well as help them deal with the Russian Orthodox Church. Thiessen refers to a lengthy statement written by Friesen on behalf of the Stundists, as well as a personal letter which he wrote to the Chief Procurator of the Holy Synod, Konstantin Petrovitsch Pobedonostzev. The letter was very direct and admonished the official not to persecute Christians. It was obviously a very risky undertaking by Friesen. He knew that he might well be exiled for his bold action. Indeed, before long Friesen was under police surveillance, which lasted for approximately six months. But one day Friesen was surprised to receive a brief response directly from the Procurator. It quoted the Scripture from Acts 10:34: "I now see how true it is that God has no favourites, but that in every nation the man who is God-fearing and does what is right is acceptable to him." After that Friesen was left in peace.

The broader political events which were taking place in Russia during these years also had a profound impact on Friesen. The years 1904 and 1905 brought a particularly severe crisis to the country. Russia was engaged in a war with Japan which had not gone well; unrest in the country as a whole had increased for a long time because of unsuccessful attempts at reform. In 1905 the various forces of discontent finally coalesced into a revolution which forced Czar Nicholas to take

action. On October 30 the Czar issued the October Manifesto which included the guarantees of individual liberties and the right to elect a Duma which would henceforth need to approve all laws.

The Czars had been following rigorous policies of Russification and repression of minorities, especially the Poles, Finns and Jews. Pogroms, or wholesale massacres of Jews, were widespread. The failure of the Russo-Japanese War was blamed on the Jews. Friesen reports how he felt compelled to intercede on their behalf, even though it meant that his own life would be in danger. He relates how he left his sickbed on 21 October 1905 to proceed to the marketplace in Sevastopol where an angry crowd gathered and threatened to take vengeance on the local Jews. In a dramatic move Friesen stepped onto a vehicle in the midst of the crowd and pled with them to show love. After all, they called themselves Christians. Miraculously, it seemed, the crowd dispersed.

Friesen was also involved more directly in political activity. In later years Friesen was probably reluctant to write much about his earlier political activities. Following the October Manifesto of 1905, a number of political parties emerged. Friesen was an organizer of one which referred to itself as the "Union of Freedom, Truth and Peace: Foes of all Violence, Proponents of Unceasing Civil, Economic and Moral-Spiritual Progress." A Russian Communist author, A I Klibanov, refers to Friesen as heading a "political organization uniting bourgeois elements of the Baptist, Evangelical Christian and Mennonite churches." The members, he claims, were mostly Mennonites from the Crimea, but also other evangelicals such as I S Prokhanov and Odinstov. The group, in fact, was referred to as the "Friesen Party," and Sevastopol became the permanent location of the Central Bureau of the party. Sevastopol was considered the centre of sectarian activity by many.

The original mandate of the party was accepted in late October or early November. Terry Martin states that the most distinctive characteristic of the Union's platform was its strong Christian character. Friesen and one other Mennonite, Johann Isaak, were among the seven signatories. Klibanov quotes their appeal as follows:

Time is precious and the matter is urgent, therefore let us create out of ourselves one indivisible, holy and large family, bound by freedom, truth and peace, but not by quarrels, theft, arson, blood-letting, destruction and other disorders, to which anarchists and revolutionaries call us...Let us enter into a good union with each other...let us peacefully elect our representatives, who will rule from our heart with our Czar and wipe away the tears of our motherland, for which we call for God's blessing, and may he preserve our sovereign emperor, his house, his good counselors, and us all.

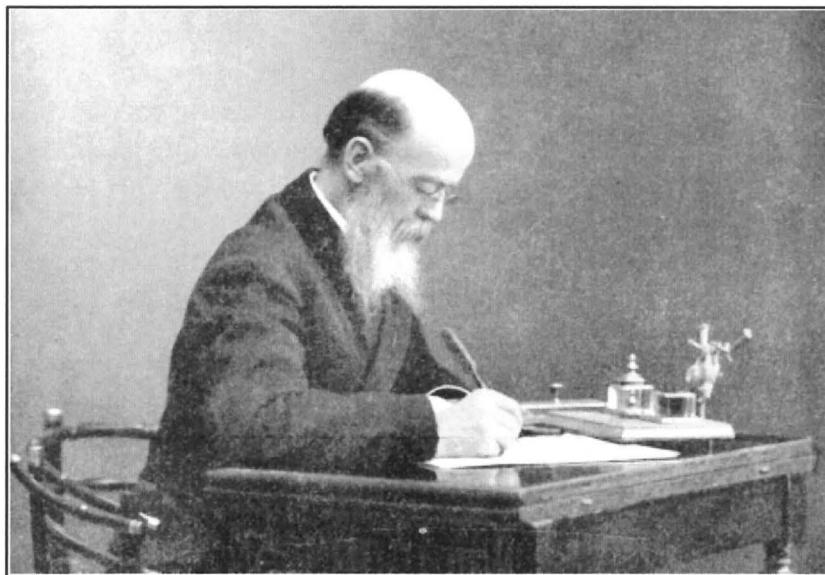
The mandate, which was radicalized on 28 November 1905, called for such things as a constitutional monarchy and a parliament with a single chamber which would pass all laws. It also called for universal suffrage, progressive labour legislation, universal free education of children, the elimination of poverty and provision of land at just prices to the peasants, freedom of conscience, speech and assembly, and the removal of the privileged status of any religion. The radicalized version brought the policies of the party into line with the Kadet Party and Friesen himself became an honorary member of the Sevastopol Kadet Central Committee. The evangelical leader, I S Prokhanov, also joined the Friesen party at this time. Martin suggests that this likely pushed the party further to the left.

In February 1906 Friesen withdrew from the Kadet Party, claiming that it had moved to the left and that it was too aligned with a religious party, namely the Jews. Friesen was severely criticized by the leader of the Kadets, Dikii, for veering to the right. Friesen was suspected of being concerned with the support of rich Mennonite landholders who feared expropriation of their property if the Kadets had their way. Friesen did appeal for Mennonite support, even though he knew that “many will find our political program far too radical - on the women’s right to vote, and the land question...” But he thought that the proposed policies were the minimum to prevent revolution, which Mennonites in isolated villages would not understand.

The Union itself did not survive beyond 1906 and fielded no candidates in the Duma elections. Friesen apparently criticized the “leftist slant” evidenced in some of the party. A reorganized group was led by Ivan Prokhanov, who founded a newspaper to propagate his views. Klibanov concludes that in general the Baptists (including Mennonites) played a counter-revolutionary role in Russia from 1905 to 1907, helping “the ruling classes to curtail the front of the revolutionary struggle.” Friesen is seen as being even more conservative than his Baptist allies and as “the representative of large capitalist landowners and industrialists.”

Friesen attributed the failure of the party among Mennonites to their innate conservatism and he became quite bitter. Martin suggests that despite this that Friesen himself was not far removed from this conservative mind set, patriotism and monarchy, and that “the radical planks in his program, with the exception of the religiously motivated ones, were concessions to the times, not matters of principle...” In the end, he states, the Mennonite political opinion was one which was “tried and abandoned.” While this is certainly true with regard to some of the party’s policies, it probably does not adequately recognize those policies which tried to address the economic disparities.

On the whole the view of Friesen which emerges with respect to the political and social realities is that he, like most Mennonites, was staunchly supportive of the Czar but hoped for some liberalization of the Czarist policies. He had already revealed himself as supportive of



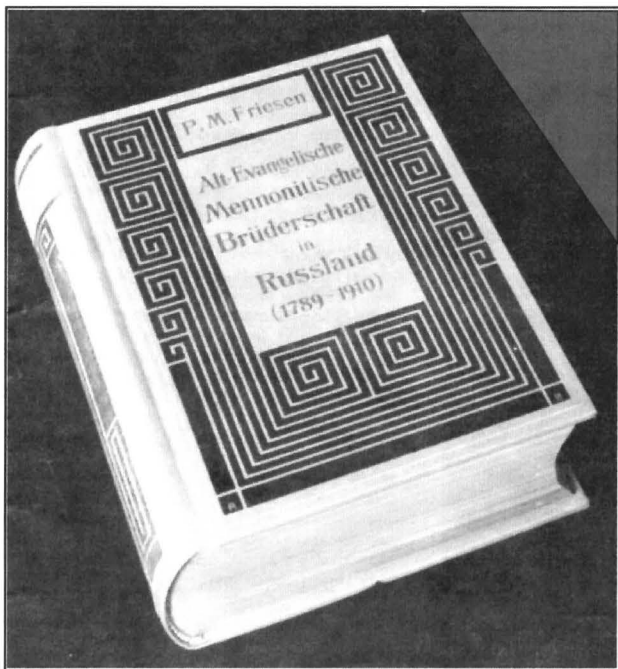
Peter Martinovitch Friesen

Russianization of education and language among the Mennonites. The ideal type of government, in his view, was to be patterned after the constitutional monarchy of Great Britain. The plight of the peasants was to be rectified, but Friesen did not believe in radical and sudden change. The system which had produced Mennonite wealth was basically sound, but needed some corrective measures.

Despite Friesen’s essentially conservative social and political philosophy, again

and again he demonstrated his concern for the weak and oppressed, not simply through acts of charity but by his own identification with them. The Friesen home was always open to others. The circumstances under which a foster child, Caroline, came to their home are not known. At one point Friesen spent a brief period in prison because he had intervened on behalf of someone who was accused of robbery.

After his sojourn in Sevastopol Friesen spent a brief period of time in Moscow and expended considerable effort ministering to young people who were studying in that city. From there he moved to Tiege in the Molotschna Colony where he spent the final years of his life in somewhat



*Alt-Evangelische Mennonitische Bruderschaft in Russland (1789-1910)*

lowly circumstances. During this time he was particularly active in inter-Mennonite affairs. He was a member of the Committee on Church Affairs (*Kommission fuer Kirchenangelegenheiten - KfK*) for several years. In 1910, when delegates of all the Mennonite bodies met together as part of the General Conference of Mennonites in Russia, Friesen was elated. He was an active participant in the consultations which sought to bring all Mennonites under a single legal umbrella, including a common constitution. Early in 1914, shortly before his death, he suffered severe disappointment because of the failure of the project due to ill-will of some of the participants.

One of Friesen's long-term assignments was writing the history of the Mennonite Brethren Church, commemorating its twenty-five years of existence. Obviously his work took him well beyond the 1885 date and the scope of his research and collection of materials

broadened, but the final outcome was worth the wait. "*Die Alt-Evangelische Mennonitische Bruderschaft in Russland (1789-1910) im Rahmen der mennonitischen Gesamtgeschichte*" was published by the Raduga publishing house of Halbstadt in 1911.

For many years Friesen's book was acknowledged as the most important historical work and collection of documents in Russia. Although it was commissioned by the Mennonite Brethren, when it appeared it was much more. The German title itself is evidence that Friesen intended it as a much broader history and he placed it in the broad interpretive framework of Mennonite history. Even the title, however, did not refer to the fact that the book included significant sections on American Mennonites, and not only those of Russian background.

In recent decades, however, many other sources, particularly from Russian archives, have been discovered. The result has been that Friesen's work has diminished somewhat in significance, especially as it relates to the broader social, economic and political realities. Relatively less has been added to the strictly religious or churchly documentation pertaining to the Russian Mennonites. But



to date most of the more comprehensive studies of the Russian Mennonites still rely extensively on P M Friesen. Many of the documents in the Friesen collection are still not available elsewhere, and thus Friesen's work will continue to be a benchmark for much scholarly work. The book has been translated into English, and another German version has also been published.

Peter M Friesen died 19 October 1914, a few months after the out break of World War I and near the end of one of the most significant eras of Mennonite history. A tribute appeared in October in the *Friedensstimme*, written by Benjamin B Janz. According to the tribute one of the greatest joys in Friesen's final days was the realization that Mennonite young men were serving in the medical corps, thereby showing their love and loyalty to their fellow citizens. He wrote his son Paul in Moscow that he was not to return home for his father's funeral, that many other sons could not see their fathers during this critical time, and that caring for the sick and wounded was their primary responsibility. Nevertheless Paul did see his father just prior to his death, but he returned to his duties as *Sanitaeter* before the funeral which took place at the Ohrloff church on October 23. Three ministers spoke at the funeral: Heinrich Unruh, Johannes Janzen and Jakob W Reimer.

It is unfortunate that Friesen became known almost entirely for his work as Mennonite Brethren historian and the magnum opus which was published only four years before his death. The book actually represents a relatively small part of his life's endeavors. His contemporaries knew him more for his extensive involvements in a broad range of activities including education, inter-Mennonite dialogue, relationship development with Russian and other evangelicals, political activism and various humanitarian concerns. It would be difficult if not impossible to find another Russian Mennonite leader who had the breadth of awareness and insight into Russian society and who sought so hard to come to terms with how Mennonites might find their place within that society. The Russian Mennonite world was changing, and Friesen was aware that Mennonites could not continue to live much longer on the naive assumption that they were isolated and protected from the rest of society.

Although Friesen was more aware than most Mennonite leaders of the disruptive forces at work within Russian society as a whole, as well as within the Mennonite communities in particular, he certainly did not foresee and could not have been prepared for the changes that were about to take place. He was a Russian patriot with unquestioned loyalty to the Czar. His experience with the 1905 Revolution did not equip him to deal with the critical period ahead and, to the extent that Mennonites were a favoured ethno-religious minority, Friesen did not seriously challenge the status quo. He showed empathy and concern for the poor and the weak, interceding on their behalf and even risking his life for them, but he did not seriously challenge those with the wealth and power to help bring about fundamental change.

On the religious front Friesen can rightly be called a "pan-Mennonite." He spent much time seeking to resolve the differences between the different Mennonite bodies, the so-called *Kirchliche*, the *Allianz* and the Brethren. At times he chastised the Brethren severely for their narrow-mindedness; at other times he was critical of the religious leaders on the other side. He was admired by many on both sides. With respect to the *Kleine Gemeinde* and other generally more conservative groups who had left in the 1870s he was certainly critical and at times unfair. But scholars will probably never agree about who among the various Mennonite groups at the time was most faithful to the Anabaptist vision as articulated by recent scholars. Friesen was certainly strongly influenced by the evangelical-pietist movement in Europe and worked closely with the Baptists and other

evangelical groups in Russia. But Pietism was a complex movement itself and its relationship to the Anabaptists is not easily assessed. None of the Mennonite groups in Russia in the nineteenth century would have measured up very well when compared to the idealized descriptions of Anabaptism in some twentieth-century Anabaptist scholarship. But P M Friesen was part of, and an instrument of, a religiously reinvigorated Mennonite community as a whole at the beginning of the twentieth century. Without him the Mennonite community could probably not have survived as well as it did.

#### Sources:

Braun, Peter, "Peter Martinovitch Friesen, 1849-1914, *Mennonite Life*, October 1948, p 8  
*Der Bote*

11 October 1978, p 6

*Der Botschafter*

7 December 1905, p 2; 30 December 1905, pp 2-4; 19 January 1906, p 3

Dueck, Abe J, "Mennonites, the Russian State and the Crisis of Brethren and Old Church Relations in Russia, 1910-1918," *Mennonite Quarterly Review*, October 1995, pp 453-486

Ens, Adolf, "Mennonite Education in Russia" in John Friesen ed., *Mennonites in Russia: Essays in Honour of Gerhard Lohrenz*, CMBC Publications, 1989, pp 75-97

*Friedensstimme*

19 February 1911, pp 6-7; 23 February 1911, pp 3-4; 26 February 1911, pp 6-7;  
2 March 1911, pp 5-6; 25 October 1914, p 3

Friesen, Abraham, ed. *P M Friesen and His History: Understanding Mennonite Brethren Beginnings*, Centre for Mennonite Brethren Studies, Fresno, California, 1979, many pages

Friesen, P M, *Glaubensbekenntnis der Vereinigten Christlichen Taufgesinnten Mennonitischen Bruedergemeinde in Russland*, Halbstadt, 1902

Friesen, P M, *Die Alt-Evangelische Mennonitische Bruederschaft in Russland (1789-1910)*, Raduga, Taurida, Russia, 1911, many pages. Friesen states (p 694) that Martin Friesen of Sparrau built many mills for Russian peasants and noblemen as well as a wooden threshing machine driven by a horse-gin. Although he does not identify this Martin Friesen as his father, it seems very likely that he was. If so, it does not seem very plausible that Friesen came from a poor family.

This book was published in English, translated and edited by J B Toews et al, and published by Board of Christian Literature, General Conference of Mennonite Brethren Churches, Fresno, California, 1978

Friesen, P M, *Ein Mennonitischer Schaecher. Drei Briefe von Prediger P M F*, published by John J Kroeker, Hepburn, Saskatchewan

Friesen, P M, *Konfession oder Sekte? Der Gemeinsame Konvent in Schoenwiese am 7 Maerz und die Kommission in Halbstadt am 11 April 1914*, Raduga, 1914

Janz, Benjamin B, "P M Friesen," *Friedensstimme*, 25 October 1914, pp 3-4

Janzen, Jakob, "Peter Martynowitsch Friesen, *Christlicher Familienkalender*, 1918, pp 118-124

- Klibanov, Aleksander Illich, *History of Religious Sectarianism in Russia (1860s-1917)*, tr from the 1965 edition by Ethel Dunn, ed by Stephen P Dunn, Pergamon Press, Willowdale, Ontario, 1982, pp 317-321
- Kroeker, Abraham, "Wie im Jahre 1905 einer Judenhetze vorgebeugt wurde," in *Christlicher Familienkalender*, 1918, pp 149-151
- Kroeker, Abraham, "Prediger Peter Martinowitsch Friesen" in *Unsere Brueder in Not: Bilder vom Leidensweg der deutschen Kolonisten in Russland*, Verlag von Theodor Urban, Striegau, Germany, 1930, pp 30-37
- Loewen, Harry, "Condemned to Die," in *No Permanent City: Stories from Mennonite History and Life*, Herald Press, Waterloo, Ontario and Scottdale, Pennsylvania, 1993, pp 152-155
- Martin, Terry, "The Mennonites and the Russian State Duma," 1905-1914, in *The Donald W Treadgold Papers in Russian, East European and Central Asian Studies*, No. 4, Jackson School of International Studies, University of Washington, Seattle, Washington, 1996, pp 11-20
- Odessaer Zeitung*  
14/26 July 1888, p 2; 20 September/2 October 1888, p 2; 13/25 October 1888, p 1-2; 15/28 February 1908, p 3
- Plett, Delbert, "Bergthaler-Chortitzer Friesens," *Preservings*, December 1997, p 3
- Plett, Delbert, "Separatist Pietism," *Preservings*, June 1998, pp 12-15
- Schellenberg, Bernhard, "P M Friesen," *Mennonitische Rundschau*, 5 January, 19 January, 23 February, 1944
- Schellenberg, Bernhard, "Zur Unterhaltung," *Mennonitische Rundschau*, 5 January 1944, p 3
- Thiessen, Franz, *P M Friesen 1849-1914: Personal Recollections*, Board of Christian Literature, General Conference of Mennonite Brethren Churches, Winnipeg, Manitoba, 1974, many pages
- Thiessen, Franz, "My Recollections of P M Friesen," *Mennonite Life*, October 1948, pp 9-10, 45
- Urry, James, *None But Saints: The Transformation of Mennonite Life in Russia 1789-1889*, Hyperion Press, Winnipeg, Manitoba, 1989
- Urry, James, "The Mennonite Commonwealth in Late Imperial Russia (1880-1917): The Pursuit of Power and Privilege," chapter in forthcoming book, CMBS, Winnipeg, Manitoba
- Zionsbote*  
14 May 1902, pp 2-3, 5; 28 May 1902, p 2; These two references are a letter which P M Friesen wrote to John F Harms, editor of *Zionsbote*. He makes one reference to his health "Nieren-Lungen- und Herzleiden und dadurch oft peinvolle Nervoesetaet," This is fairly vague and could refer to many conditions, such as heart failure or some kind of nephritis as well as psychological depression  
13 December 1914; 30 December 1914, p 5



## SOURCES

(for the entire Sevastopol chapter)

- Braun, Peter, "Peter Martinovitch Friesen, 1849-1914," *Mennonite Life*, October 1948, p 8  
*Der Bote*  
11 October 1978, p 6  
*Der Botschafter*  
7 December 1905, p 2; 30 December 1905, pp 2-4; 19 January 1906, p 3
- Dueck, Abe J, "Mennonites, the Russian State and the Crisis of Brethren and Old Church Relations in Russia, 1910-1918," *Mennonite Quarterly Review*, October, 1995, pp 453-486
- Durksen, Martin, *Die Krim war unsere Heimat*, self-published, Winnipeg, Canada, 1977, pp 159-160
- Ens, Adolf, "Mennonite Education in Russia," in John Friesen ed., *Mennonites in Russia: Essays in Honour of Gerhard Lohrenz*, CMBC Publications, 1989, pp 75-97
- Friedensstimme*  
19 February 1911, pp 6-7; 23 February 1911, pp 3-4; 26 February 1911, pp 6-7; 2 March 1911, pp 5-6; 25 October 1914, p 3
- Friesen, Abraham, ed *P M Friesen and His History: Understanding Mennonite Brethren Beginnings*, Centre for Mennonite Brethren Studies, Fresno, California, 1979, many pages
- Friesen, P M, *Glaubensbekenntnis der Vereinigten Christlichen Taufgesinnten Mennonitischen Bruedergemeinde in Russland*, Halbstadt, 1902
- Friesen, P M, *Die Alt-Evangelische Mennonitische Bruederschaft in Russland (1789-1910)*, Raduga, Taurida, Russia, 1911, many pages. Friesen states (p 694) that Martin Friesen of Sparrau built many mills for Russian peasants and noblemen as well as a wooden threshing machine driven by a horse-gin. Although he does not identify this Martin Friesen as his father, it seems very likely that he was. If so, it does not seem very plausible that Friesen came from a poor family.  
This book was published in English, translated and edited by J B Toews et al, and published by Board of Christian Literature, General Conference of Mennonite Brethren Churches, Fresno, California, 1978
- Friesen, P M, *Ein Mennonitischer Schaecher. Drei Briefe von Prediger P M F*, published by John J Kroeker, Hepburn, Saskatchewan
- Friesen, P M, *Konfession oder Sekte? Der Gemeinsame Konvent in Schoenwiese am 7 Maerz und die Kommission in Halbstadt am 11 April 1914*, Raduga, 1914
- Janz, Benjamin B, "P M Friesen," *Friedensstimme*, 25 October 1914, pp 3-4
- Janzen, Jakob, "Peter Martynowitsch Friesen, *Christlicher Familienkalender*, 1918, pp 118-124
- Klibanov, Aleksander Illich, *History of Religious Sectarianism in Russia (1860s-1917)*, tr from the 1965 edition by Ethel Dunn, ed by Stephen P Dunn, Pergamon Press, Willowdale, Ontario, 1982, pp 317-321
- Kroeker, Abraham, "Wie im Jahre 1905 einer Judenhetze vorgebeugt wurde," in

- Christlicher Familienkalender*, 1918, pp 149-151
- Kroeker, Abraham, "Prediger Peter Martinowitsch Friesen" in *Unsere Brueder in Not: Bilder vom Leidensweg der deutschen Kolonisten in Russland*, Verlag von Theodor Urban, Striegau, Germany, 1930, pp 30-37
- Loewen, Harry, "Condemned to Die" in *No Permanent City: Stories from Mennonite History and Life*, Herald Press, Waterloo, Ontario and Scottdale, Pennsylvania, 1993, pp 152-155
- Martin, Terry, "The Mennonites and the Russian State Duma, 1905-1914, in *The Donald W Treadgold Papers in Russian, East European and Central Asian Studies*, No. 4, Jackson School of International Studies, University of Washington, Seattle, Washington, 1996, pp 11-20
- Mawdsley, Evan, *The Russian Civil War*, Birlinn Limited, Edinburgh, 2000, p 270
- Odessaer Zeitung*  
 14/26 July 1888, p 2; 20 September/2 October 1888, p 2; 13/25 October 1888, p 1-2;  
 15/28 February 1908, p 3
- Plett, Delbert, "Bergthaler-Chortitzer Friesens," *Preservings*, December 1997, p 3
- Plett, Delbert, "Separatist Pietism," *Preservings*, June 1998, pp 12-15
- Ridpath, John Clark, *Encyclopaedia of Universal History*, Nineteenth Century, Volume IV, The Jones Brothers Publishing Company, Cincinnati, Ohio and J W Lyon, Guelph, Ontario, 1890, pp 705, 712
- Schellenberg, Bernhard, "P M Friesen," *Mennonitische Rundschau*, 5 January, 19 January, 23 February, 1944
- Schellenberg, Bernhard, "Zur Unterhaltung," *Mennonitische Rundschau*, 5 January 1944, p 3
- Thiessen, Franz, *P M Friesen 1849-1914: Personal Recollections*, Board of Christian Literature, General Conference of Mennonite Brethren Churches, Winnipeg, Manitoba, 1974, many pages
- Thiessen, Franz, "My Recollections of P M Friesen," *Mennonite Life*, October 1948, pp 9-10, 45
- Urry, James, *None But Saints: The Transformation of Mennonite Life in Russia 1789-1889*, Hyperion Press, Winnipeg, Manitoba, 1989
- Urry, James, "The Mennonite Commonwealth in Late Imperial Russia (1880-1917): The Pursuit of Power and Privilege," chapter in forthcoming book, CMBS, Winnipeg
- Zionsbote*  
 14 May 1902, pp 2-3; 28 May 1902, p 2; 13 December 1914; 30 December 1914, p 5

# Chapter VII

# SIMFEROPOL

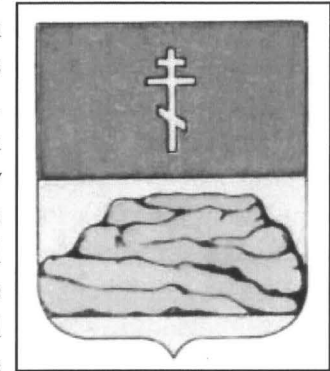
## TABLE OF CONTENTS

Table of Contents.....	408
History of Simferopol.....	409
Map of Simferopol City (2000).....	412
Scenes of Simferopol.....	413
Kursk-Kharkov-Sevastopol Railway.....	414
List of People.....	415
Businesses and Institutions.....	425
Business and Institutional Advertising.....	427
Medical Personnel in 1915.....	428
University of Simferopol Students.....	429
Pictures of People.....	430
Rehabilitation Letter.....	434
“The Purge”.....	435
Sources.....	437

## HISTORY OF SIMFEROPOL

Simferopol is a city located in south central Crimea, on the small Salgir River. It is at 350 metres above sea level, coordinates are 44°57N, 34°6E and the area is 107 square kilometres. Temperatures in January and February can dip to just below 0°C, while July and August reach 36 or 37°C. The present city has within its boundaries an important archeological site known as Scythian Neapolis. It was a settlement that existed from the end of the third century BC until the second half of the third century AD. It was the centre of the Crimean Scythian tribes, and ruled over a small kingdom covering the lands between the lower Dniepr River and Crimea. Neapolis was destroyed half way through the third century AD by the Goths. At excavation a large public building with columns was found, as well as a mausoleum and more than 70 burial sites of Scythian noblemen. One of the skeletons was that of King Skylur, another burial site was that of a Scythian queen.

The Tatar city of Ak Mechet (White Mosque) was established on the site in the fifteenth century. The Russians renamed the city Simferopol after the conquest of Crimea by Catherine II in 1784. It was the administrative centre of the region, reflected in its name. Simferopol means "city collector" in Greek. In 1802 the city became the administrative centre of the Taurida Governorate. In the 1820s and 1830s Simferopol was one of the markets used by traders from the Molotschna, such as Johann Cornies, to sell their agricultural products, hams, sausages, lard, butter and eggs.



Simferopol Crest

In 1850 there were 16 educational institutions in Simferopol, among them being the Provincial Crown *Gymnasium*.

During the Crimean War Simferopol was not actually a battlefield, but Russian Army reserves and a hospital were located in the city. More than 30,000 Russian soldiers were buried in the vicinity of the city. Mennonite wagons and drivers often brought supplies to the area. The Mennonites also accepted the care of 5,000 wounded soldiers, taking them back to the facilities in the Molotschna.

Travel to and from Crimea, such as connecting to the Molotschna, was by road, basically a wide strip of land cleared to allow wagons and carriages to travel, but also wide enough to provide grass for the horses. The Perekoper Way went south from Perekop at the north end of Crimea, through Simferopol, and on to Sevastopol.

Starting in the mid 1800s Russia was starting to develop an extensive rail system. The Kharkov-Sevastopol railway, which ran through Simferopol, was completed in 1875. Two types of locomotives were built specifically to serve on the Kursk-Kharkov-Sevastopol Railway. Spat, with station Sarabus, was north of Simferopol on this line.

At the time of the flourishing of the Mennonites in south Russia, Simferopol seems to have been commonly frequented for medical treatments. The people may well have gone to the Dr Muehlenthal Hospital where various specialist surgeons operated. According to the frequency of its advertising, the *Wasserkur Abteilung* of the private hospital of Dr S Levin was also popular. In the life story of a number of people the only contact with Simferopol mentioned was that they died there. It could have been that they were in a city hospital for treatment, and, not recovering, died there.



St Alexander Nevsky Cathedral in 1903

Mennonites also attended educational institutions in Simferopol, particularly the university. There is record of only one Mennonite business located in Simferopol. Peter Reimer sold Keystone-Elgin watches and other jewelry, frequently advertising in the *Christlicher Familienkalender* early in the century, 1904-1905.

In the twentieth century Simferopol was again affected by wars in the region. Crimea was a White Army stronghold during the Civil War, with General Pyotr Wrangel having his headquarters in Simferopol.

On 13 November 1920 the Red Army finally captured the city. On 18 October 1921 it became the capital of the Crimean Autonomous Soviet Socialist Republic.

Simferopol suffered the usual deprivations of the Communist take over. The St Alexander Nevsky Cathedral was destroyed by the Soviet government in 1930. The GPU (State Security Service) established a prison which was freely used to subdue and torture the surrounding population. In 1930, for example, 24 Mennonite families from Spat were rounded up on 24 April 1930 and taken to Simferopol, having been judged to be dangerous "Kulaks." Within two days eight long trains left the city, taking their exiled passengers to the far Russian north. For some peculiar reason four families were not banished. They were given citizenship documents and the right to collect their belongings, if they could find them. The family of Abram J Klassen was one of the four granted these privileges, although Abram himself had already been exiled, and died 5 July 1931. Men from the Crimea were commonly imprisoned in Simferopol during the "Great Purge" of the late 1930s. Franz Teichrieb of Spat was in the GPU prison for a year before he was sent to the far reaches of Siberia. Jakob Janzen of Tchongrav was more fortunate, being released after three months of incarceration.

During World War II Simferopol was occupied by the German Army between 1 November 1941 and 13 April 1944. On one occasion, 13 December 1941, the *Einsatzgruppe D* under Otto Ohlendorf killed at least 14,300 residents. In all over 22,000 people were killed, mostly Jews and Russians.

On 26 April 1956 Simferopol and the rest of Crimea was transferred from Russia to the Ukrainian SSR by Nikita Krushchev. After the collapse of the Soviet Union Simferopol became the capital of the Autonomous Republic of Crimea within independent Ukraine. The majority of the citizens of the city are ethnic Russians, but there are also significant Ukrainian and Tatar minorities.



University of Simferopol

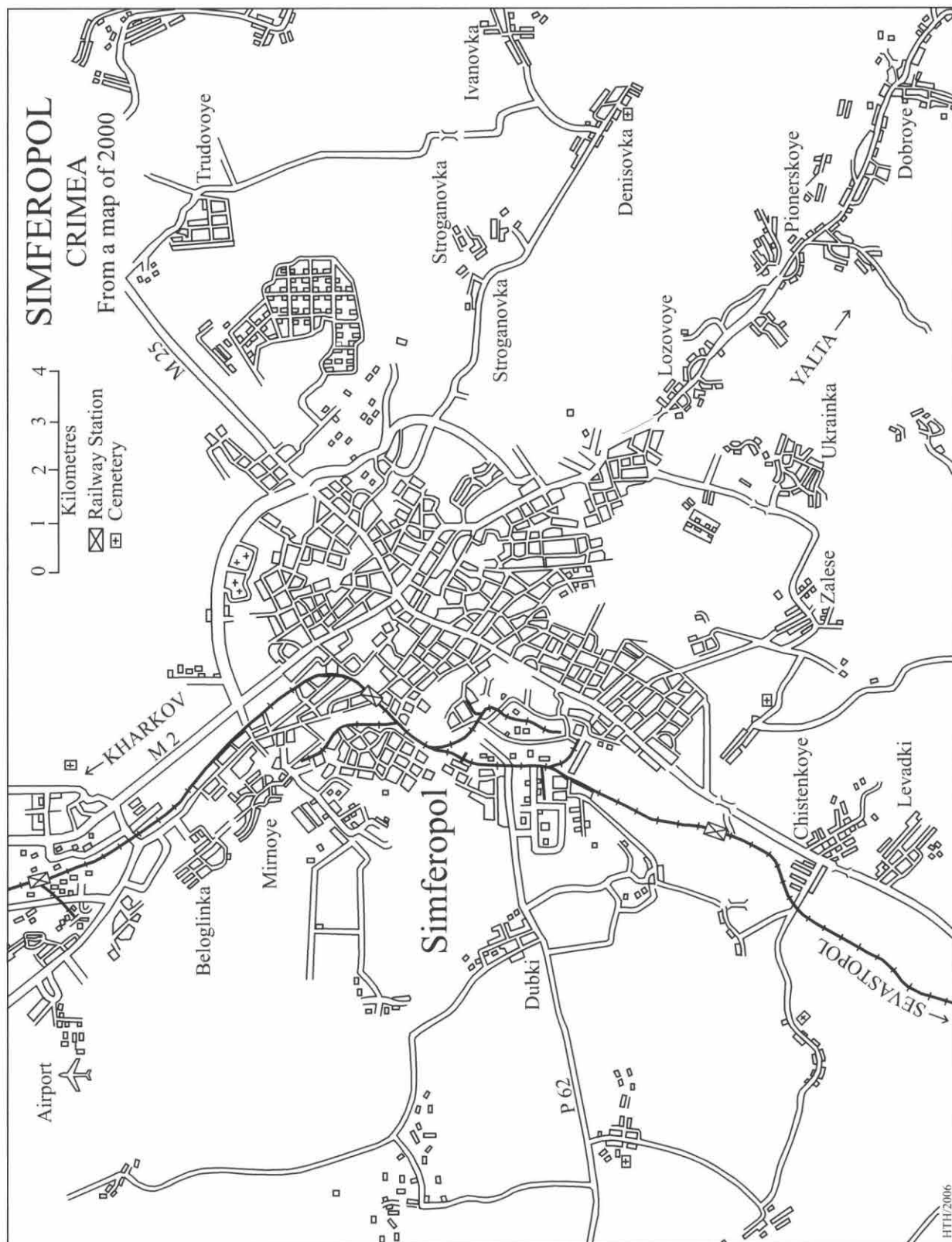
Simferopol has a large railway station, being on the Sevastopol-Kharkov line, and has an

international airport. Many tourists go through the city, largely on the way south to the nearby tourist resorts. The longest trolley bus line in the world connects Simferopol to Yalta on Crimea's Black Sea coast. It is also in the heart of the truck-farming and fruit-growing region. Industries include food processing, wine making, fruit canning, and the manufacture of machinery, machine tools, power station equipment and consumer goods. A recent survey comments that there is no high-rise building in Simferopol. Current population is about 400,000.

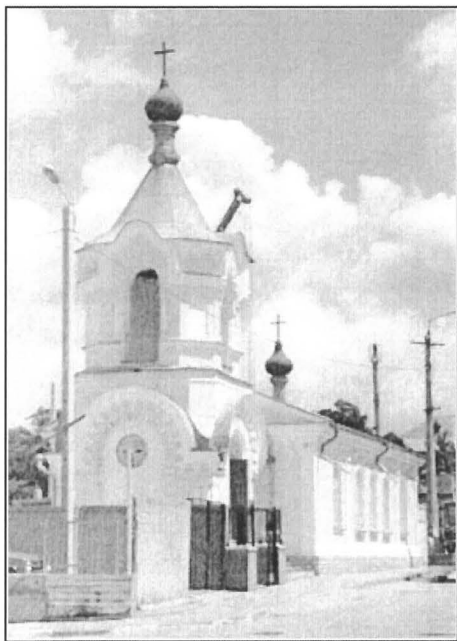
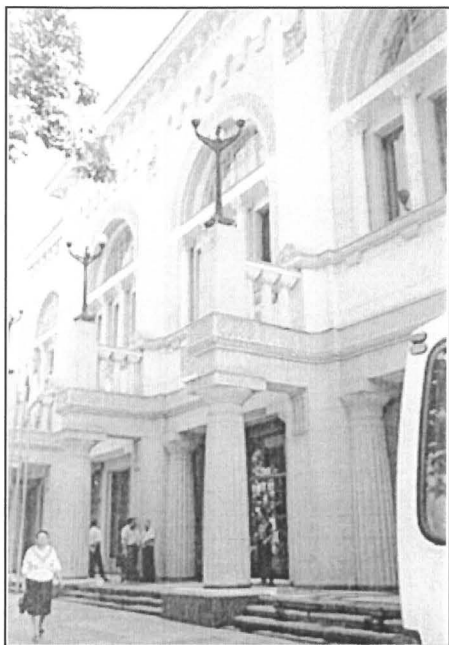
The Central State Archive of Crimea is situated in Simferopol, and has many records relating to Mennonite activities, since it was for many years the capital of the Taurida Governorate.

Adolph Joffe, a Russian Communist revolutionary, later a Bolshevik politician and diplomat, came from Simferopol. Yana Klochkova, a Ukrainian swimmer from the city, has won five Olympic gold medals in her career.

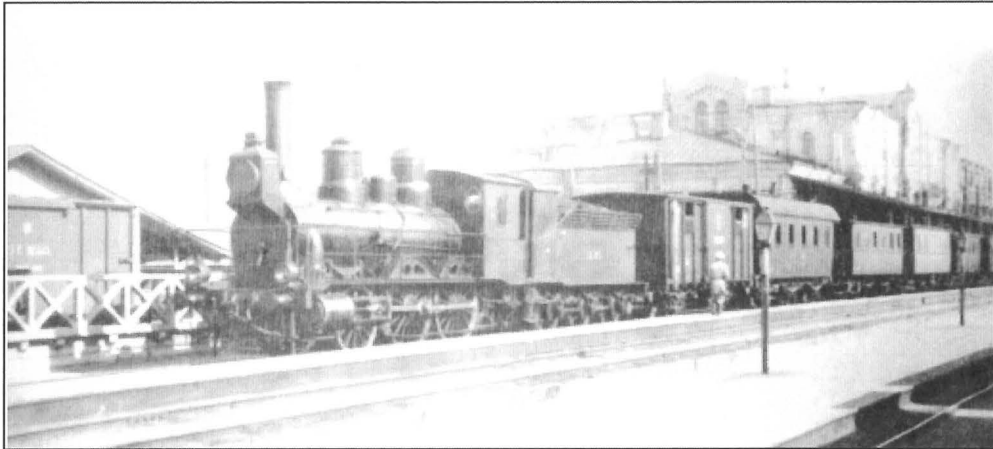
The St Alexander Nevsky Cathedral is now being reconstructed, to look exactly as it was before 1930. It was originally built in the early nineteenth century, to honor a wish of Czarina Catherine II. The first stone of the renewed foundation was laid in 2000. An old architect, Borys Isaiev, remembered the cathedral from the time before it was destroyed. He commented, "The church never failed to impress with its splendor...The sound of the cathedral's great bell carried and was heard in many villages in the Simferopol area. My soul rejoices in the expectation of the moment when I will hear the bells of Crimea's main sanctuary again."



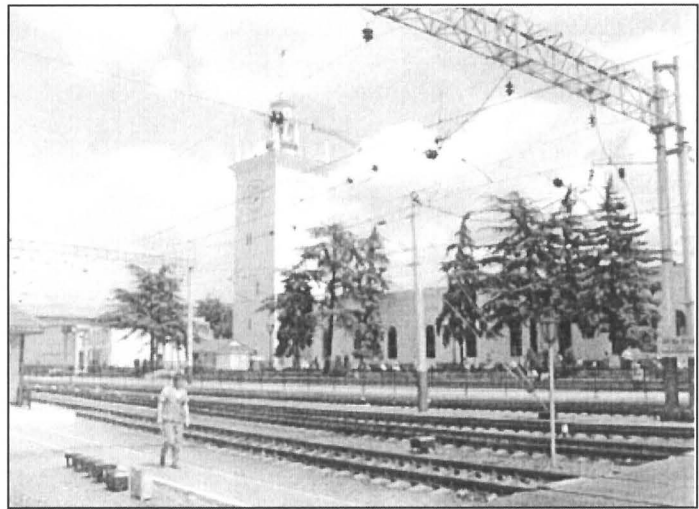




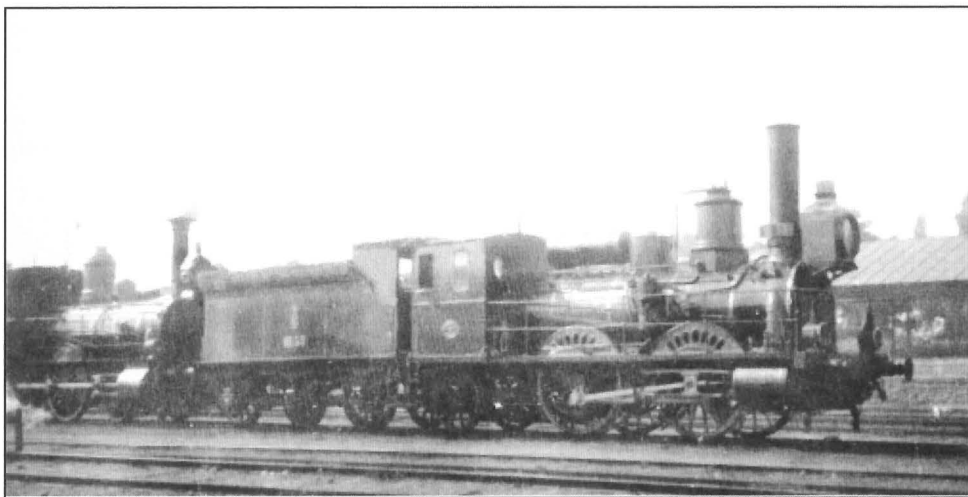
The Kursk-Kharkov-Sevastopol Railway  
(going through Simferopol)



One of the original passenger engines built for the Kursk-Kharkov-Sevastopol Railway around 1870



Simferopol train station



Locomotives of the Kursk-Kharkov-Sevastopol Railway, the nearer engine built by Schneider in 1869-70

## LIST OF PEOPLE

(People who at one time lived in Simferopol)  
(Each name will appear in **bold** print only once)

### Note:

There were no refugees reported in the pages of the *Mennonitische Rundschau* as immigrating directly from Simferopol to Canada in the 1920s, or escaping across the Amur in 1930. A total of 85 Mennonites have been found who spent some time in Simferopol. In 16 of these the only connection seems to be that they died there. Simferopol was a medical referral centre, so it is quite possible that a number of these people actually died in one of the city hospitals, treatment of their condition having been unsuccessful.

### **Braun, Johann**

Born 7 January 1896

Married **Katharina Epp**

She was born 18 December 1899 in Biyuk-Busau, Crimea

They probably lived in Simferopol

Children:

**Katharina** - born 25 April 1926, died 1942

**Johann** - born 8 May 1930 in Simferopol, married Irisa Dall 26 February 1959,  
arrived in Germany 20 July 1990

**Heinrich** - born 1933, married Lydia Konrad, 1 child born in Karaganda, Kazakhstan

Father Johann died in 1943 in Komi, Asiatic Russia

### **Cornies, Johann**

As a young man, in the 1820s, while living in the Molotschna, he packed his wagon with hams, sausages, lard, butter and eggs, and headed for the Crimea, where he visited Feodosia, Simferopol and Sevastopol to sell his goods

### **Cornies, Helene**

Born 1886

Parents Thomas Cornies and Susanna Derksen

She died 1916 in Simferopol

### **Duekmann, Mrs Peter**

Died in hospital after major surgery in 1902

### **Duerksen, Johann (Hans)**

Born 6 April 1902

Parents Johann Duerksen and Katharina Heinrichs

Johann was the fourth of 13 children (of which only 6 reached adulthood)

Student in *Lehrerseminar* at the University of Simferopol in 1924, became a teacher in Crimea

Married Anna Neufeld 6 April 1927 in Menlertschik, had 2 children

Not a church member, was a government employee, so he could not immigrate with his parents, who left in 1929; they migrated to Paraguay in 1930

He was imprisoned during the "Great Purge"

Sentenced to death on 23 November 1937, and likely executed the same day, in Melitopol

Letter received dated 12 June 1959 that he was “Rehabilitated.” His conviction had been based on unsubstantiated evidence, and therefore was not valid

**Dyck, Anna**

Worked as medical nurse in Simferopol in 1915

**Dyck, Mrs**

Went to *Maedchenschule* in Karassan

Attended *Maedchengymnasium* in Simferopol

Lived in Crimea up to age 24

**Dyck, Peter**

Born 20 April 1900, in Karassan

Parents Isaak Dyck and Maria Pankratz

Became member of the Krimmer Mennonite Brethren Church

*Zentralschule* in Karassan, *Kommerzschule* in Alexanderkrone, *Gymnasium* in Simferopol

Medical school at medical faculty of University of Simferopol

He went to medical school during the time of the famine (1921-1922), studies interrupted periodically during the Civil War

During this time Professor Dr Stefko, an anatomist, wrote a scientific paper about the famine

Interned at the University of Kasany, on the Volga

Worked for some time with Dr Tavonius in Muntau until Tavonius died in May 1927

Married Manya Bartel 5 August 1928; they had 4 children

Took over the accident hospital at Luxemburg (formerly Gronau) in the Mariupol region

Was asked to leave by the GPU because of his Christian orientation.

Then had appointment as surgeon at port hospital in Mariupol

Fled to Moscow, then was able to escape to Germany 30 November 1930

Worked as physician in the refugee camps at Hammerstein and Prenzlau for 5 years

Studied tropical medicine in Hamburg

Migrated to Brazil, where he worked as a physician

1935 to 1953 worked in the jungle of Santa Catarina in Brazil

1953 to 1976 worked in Witmarsum, Parana

Wife died, he had fractured leg and 2 heart attacks

Died 2 June 1987

It may be that his wife was also a doctor, who possibly had studied in Simferopol

The 3 children who survived him were Roswita, Ekkehard and Gisela

**Ediger, Alexander**

(see separate biography in Berdyansk chapter)

Parents Heinrich Abram Ediger and Emilie Friesen

Third child of three, other brothers Theodor and Harry

Teacher and church elder

Exiled from Stalino in the Don Basin in 1931

Wife **Katharina** eventually came to Simferopol to care for the household of Willmar Ediger, with her 2 children, **Dagmar** and **Harry**

When Alexander was released for a brief time in 1933, he stayed in the Willmar Ediger home until he found employment in Stalino

When the authorities arrested both Alexander and Katharina Ediger in 1935 in Stalino, the children Dagmar and Harry were sent back to the Heinrich Edigers in Simferopol, where likely stayed for at least 5 years

**Ediger, Harry**

Parents Heinrich Abram Ediger and Emilie Friesen  
Second child of three, brothers Theodor and Alexander  
Was a lawyer, likely not married  
Lived in Simferopol until at least 1931

**Ediger, Heinrich**

Wife **Elisabeth Dyck** ( Maria Ediger's sister)  
Children:

**Else**

Willmar (see separate entry)

**Frieda**

Spent some time studying in Germany, probably homeopathy  
Treated patients in Simferopol, was sued by the city doctors, but he won the case  
The Edigers were forced to move to the village of Karassan during the Civil War  
Returned to Simferopol after the Communist takeover  
In 1931 they invited Katharina Ediger, Alexander's wife, to manage the household of their son  
Willmar in Simferopol

**Ediger, Theodor**

Parents Heinrich Abram Ediger and Emilie Friesen  
Eldest of three children, brothers Harry and Alexander  
Had PhD degree, was a historian  
Likely not married  
Lived in Simferopol until at least 1931

**Ediger, Willmar**

Parents Heinrich Ediger and Elisabeth Dyck  
Married, **wife** died in childbirth  
Child:

**Casik** - born about 1931

Willmar was a professor at the University of Simferopol  
Katharina Ediger came to manage the household after the death of Willmar's wife  
Katharina then stayed there with her children. When her husband Alexander was released from prison for a brief time in 1933, he also stayed there

**Fehderau, Peter Jakob**

Parents Jakob J Fehderau and Maria Bahnmann  
The father was born in Berdyansk, although the couple lived on Estate Marianovka  
6 Children , of which the fourth was:

Peter - born 7 December 1896 on Estate Marianovka, he died 23 February 1920 in Simferopol, and he was buried there

**Friesen, Abram**

Worked as a medical orderly in Simferopol in 1915

**Heinrichs, Abraham**

Born 20 April 1863 in Tiegenhagen, Molotschna  
Parents Abraham Heinrichs and Katharina Fast  
Died 27 January 1890 in Simferopol

**Janzen, Anna**

Parents Jakob Janzen and Helena Martens  
Anna died in Simferopol

**Janzen, Helena**

Born 25 April 1866 in Orechov  
Parents Johann Janzen and Katharina Schroeder  
He was a mill owner, estate owner, mayor of Orechov  
Helena was the third of 8 children  
Died 12 May 1933 in Simferopol

**Janzen, Jakob**

Lived in Tchongrav  
Arrested and imprisoned in Simferopol late 1936  
Released after 3 months, and returned home

**Klassen, Abram J**

Born 3 December 1884 in Ohrloff, Molotschna  
1893 parents moved to Spat, Crimea  
He was a teacher at village of Ebenfeld, served in the Alt-Berdyansk *Forstei*  
October 1910 married Agnes Goerz  
Spent 1 year in Barvenkovo in a Froese mill to learn the business  
After that opened own business in Spat  
With onset of World War I drafted as *Sanitaeter*, served first in Simferopol, then in  
Sanitorium in Szaki, a *Kurort* in Crimea  
After conclusion of the war was elected as minister in Spat, and was appointed as a member  
of the *Kommission fuer Kirchenangelegenheiten (KfK)*  
Arrested, imprisoned in Simferopol, sentenced to 10 years in exile in 1930  
Died in exile 5 July 1931

**Koop, Peter Peter**

Born 12 November 1894 in Chortitza, Chortitza Colony  
Parents Peter A Koop and Anna K Loewen  
Lived in Chortitza, factory owners  
Peter was the sixth of nine children  
Died April 1920 in Simferopol, likely of typhoid

**Kroeker, Heinrich**

Born 25 November 1859 in Chortitza Colony  
Parents Jakob J Kroeker and Maria F Janzen  
Heinrich was the sixth of 10 children  
He lived in Simferopol

**Kroeker, Helena**

Worked as a medical nurse in Simferopol in 1915

**Kroeker, Johann**

Married, had 3 children:

Elisabeth

\_\_\_\_\_?

Abraham

Johann was confined to a psychiatric facility (*Irrenhaus*) in Simferopol in the early 1880s

Wife with children migrated to Canada in the 1880s to live with relatives

Johann died 1906 in Simferopol, still in the psychiatric facility

**Landeis, Jakob Michael**

Sredne-Tarashevskaya 7, Simferopol, Crimea

Requested food packages through the pages of the *Mennonitische Rundschau* 22 March 1922,  
p 13

Seeking help from Nikolaus Staener and Joseph Braun, of "Stadt Rosse, North America"

This is the only person from Simferopol requesting help; it is not certain that this is actually a  
Mennonite

**Langemann, Johann Martin**

Born 11 May 1888 in Spat, Crimea

Parents Martin Jakob Langemann and Anna Huebert

Married Maria Klassen, 2 children

Died July 1916 in Simferopol

**Loewen, Peter Wilhelm**

Born 22 May 1889 in Muntau, Molotschna

Parents Wilhelm Loewen and Maria Braun

Married Justina Friesen 10 July 1914

Probably lived in Tiegenhagen

One child Peter Peter Loewen born 3 May 1914 in Tiegenhagen

Father Peter died 9 August 1916 in Simferopol of a ruptured appendix

Justina died of tuberculosis

**Maier, Mr**

Wife

Son: **Victor** - born 21 October 1916 in Simferopol

He married Frieda Wiebe 18 May 1941 in Kulja, China

4 children, the first 2 born in Chiva, China, the last 2 in Chilliwack, BC

Youngest was son Wilhelm, who married Irene Louise Toews

**Martens, Johann Johann**

Born 31 December 1836 Taschtschenak region

Married Maria Friesen of Altona, she died

Then married **Katharina Esau** 2 March 1871, 9 children

Johann died 29 August 1893 in Simferopol

Katharina died 13 December 1897 in Berdyansk, but was buried in Simferopol

**Martins, Anna (Anya)**

Born 10 May 1898

Parents Wilhelm Wilhelm Martins and Maria Dick



From the Montanai Estate, owned by 5 Martins brothers, located 30 km N of Eupatoria, Crimea  
Graduated from medicine in Simferopol, probably 1923 or 1924  
Immigrated to Canada 1926  
Never married  
Ran a psychiatric practice in Hamilton, Ontario, with her office right next to her home  
Died 1985 in Hamilton, buried in Ruddell, Saskatchewan, where others of her family are buried

**Neufeld, Gerhard Jakob**

Born Rosenort, Molotschna then moved to Ufa  
Graduated from a *Gymnasium*  
Went to the Crimean State University in Simferopol, graduated from medicine probably 1923  
Married **Margaretha Dyck** (Dueck?)  
Children: Alice, Edith, Rita, Ernst  
Went to be the regional doctor in the Davlekanovo (Ufa) region  
Imprisoned in the "Great Purge" in 1938  
The family sent him food packages for years, in the vain hope that he was still alive  
It was later discovered that he was shot 6 days after he was arrested

**Neufeld, Hermann**

From Samara  
Medical student in the University of Simferopol in 1920, likely graduated about 1924

**Neufeld, Nicholas Jakob**

Born 2 June 1897 in Rosenort, Molotschna  
Family then moved to Ufa  
Married **Susanna Loewen** 23 August 1923 in Davlekanova  
Four children, Nicholas born in Russia, Johann, Margaretha and Ernest born in Canada  
Went to the Crimean State University in Simferopol, graduated from medicine April 18, 1924  
Immigrated to Canada September 1924, and took up medical practice in southern Manitoba  
From 1929 on practiced in Winnipeg  
Co-founder of the Concordia Society (medical plan) and the Crosstown Credit Union  
Retired 1973, died 31 October 1977 in Winnipeg

**Pankratz, Mr**

Wife **Mrs Pankratz**  
Son **Abram** - born 3 September 1898 in Simferopol  
He married Elisabeth \_\_\_\_\_? in 1924 in Crimea  
Immigrated to Brazil, had 3 children there  
Abram died 22 June 1978 in Churitiba, Brazil

**Penner, Anna**

Teacher in Simferopol October 1922  
Wrote letter of thanks for the help provided by the MCC during the famine of 1921-22  
A brief letter of hers was published in D M Hofer's book

**Penner, Elisabeth (Lisa)**

Parents Jakob Penner and Anna Reimer  
Lived in Fernheim, a Mennonite village in the north east corner of Crimea  
Children of Jakob and Anna were:

Elisabeth (Lisa) - attended college in Simferopol

Jakob, Agnes, Anna

**Peters, Wilhelm**

Born March 1857 in Gnadenfeld, Molotschna

Parents Daniel Peters and Justina Ratzlaff

Married Maria Loewen 19 March 1883 in Saribasch, Crimea

4 children born in Saribasch

Wife died, married Maria (Goertzen) Kroeker

Another 6 children

First of these was **Hermann** - born 21 January in Saribasch, Crimea

Wilhelm died 6 November 1901 in Simferopol

Son Hermann died in Simferopol (date not known)

**Rahn, Hermann**

Born 29 October 1862 in Halbstadt, Molotschna

Parents Johann Jakob Rahn and Katharina Goossen

Married **Anna Peters** 2 May 1889 in Sparrau, Molotschna

Said to have lived some time in Simferopol, and later in Spat

3 children born in Crimea

Johann - born 28 March 1890 in Johannesruh, Crimea

Aganetha - born 19 January in Tohaily, Crimea

Katharina (Katya)

**Regier, Abraham**

Born 11 October 1850 in Hierschau, Molotschna

Married **Sara Hildebrand** 18 February 1875

She was born 19 November 1853 in Hierschau, Molotschna

Her parents were Peter Hildebrand and Sara Epp

They had 8 children:

**Abraham** - born 15 December 1876 in Simferopol, Abraham married Susanna Boehr,

7 children, he died 27 July 1962 in Henderson, Nebraska

The family immigrated to Nebraska, USA, next 7 children born in Nebraska

**Reimer, Peter**

Owned jewelry type store, sold watches, cabinet clocks, watch chains, medallions, rings

Advertised in *Christlicher Familienkalender*

**Rempel, Agatha**

From Gnadenfeld, Molotschna

She and her sister Maria were medical students at the University of Simferopol in 1920,

likely graduated about 1924

**Rempel, Maria**

From Gnadenfeld, Molotschna

She and her sister Agatha were medical students at the University of Simferopol in 1920,

likely graduated about 1924

**Schaefer, Mr**

Student at *Lehrerseminar* in the University of Simferopol in 1924

**Scharkov, Sergey**

From Minlertschik, Crimea

Student at *Lehrerseminar* in University of Simferopol in 1924

**Schmidt, Emil**

Born 1875 in Piatagorsk, Stavropol, South Russia

Married Gertrude Rempel 21 May 1902

One son Theodor

Emil died 30 July 1924 in Simferopol

**Stauss, Johann (Hans)**

From Spat, Crimea

Medical student at the University of Simferopol in 1920, likely graduated about 1924

**Sudermann, Theodor**

Born 14 March 1851 in Frauenberg, Prussia

Married **Alida Ruff** 20 January 1883 in Simferopol

She was born 14 October 1862 in Ulm, Baden-Wuerttemberg

Children:

**Theodor** - born 29 July 1884 in Simferopol

**Erna** - born 5 August 1888 in Simferopol

Alida died 2 September 1897 in Simferopol

Father Theodor died 30 September 1931 in Gronau, Westphalia, Germany

**Teichrieb, Franz**

Born 1895

Lived in Spat with wife Susanna, children Elvira, Arnold, Anneliese and Gerhard

Jailed as part of the "Great Purge," being arrested on the night of 24 November 1936

For at least a year held in a jail in Simferopol, then sentenced to five years exile, one of the crimes was that he had sung hymns at home

Then transferred to Magadan on the Sea of Okhotsk, 6,000 km away

During his transfer he threw a package of letters off the train near Spat, which his family found and still treasure to this day (2006)

Died in Magadan, likely 1938 or 1939

**Thiessen, Anna**

Born 11 November 1869 (1868?) in Chortitza, Chortitza

Parents Jakob Thiessen and Anna Pries

Married a Janzen, he died

Then married Bernhard Thiessen 1 May 1888, 6 children

Bernhard died 24 April 1899 in Wohldemfuerst, Kuban

Anna died 15 December 1909 in Simferopol

**Thiessen, Peter Johann**

Born 6 August 1862 in Rosenort, Molotschna

Parents Johann Thiessen and Maria Wiebe

Married Katharina Enns

9 children, all born in Rosenhof, Ekaterinoslav

Peter died 17 June 1908 in Simferopol, circumstances not known

**Toews, Aron Johann**

Born 15 July 1899 in Molotschna Colony, probably Alexanderthal

Parents Johann Aron Toews and Elisabeth Janzen

A younger brother was Johann Benjamin Toews (JB), who was born 24 September 1906 in Alexanderthal

Aron completed pre-medical training in Halbstadt at the age of 18

Governor's medal as outstanding student in the province

Entered medical faculty as youngest student ever admitted to the faculty in the University of Simferopol

Awarded MD at age of 21 in December 1920

Had minor operation of curetting out infected mastoid behind right ear under anaesthesia

Travelled to estate of his fiance, Sara Dyck

Preached to a small congregation December 25

That evening high fever, "blood poisoning" diagnosed

Died 30 December 1920, buried 2 January 1921

**Unrau, Maria** (see also Heinrich Unrau, Millerovo)

Born 15 May 1885 in Huschin, Crimea

Parents David Johann Ediger and Maria Penner

Married Heinrich Unrau 29 January 1905, 6 children

Lived in Millerovo, where Heinrich was part owner of a machine shop

Heinrich died in Millerovo 7 November 1919

Maria died 14 December 1932 in Simferopol

**Unruh, Abraham Heinrich**

Born 5 April 1878 in Temir-Bulat (Philippstal), Crimea

Parents Heinrich Benjamin Unruh and Elisabeth Wall

Seventh of 10 children, older brother of Benjamin H Unruh

Lived with uncle Kornelius Unruh in Ohrloff, Molotschna

*Dorfschule* in Tiege, *Zentralschule* in Ohrloff, Teachers College in Halbstadt

While teaching in Menlertschik he took some courses in Simferopol and Perekop, perfecting his knowledge of Russian and mathematics

Went on to teach in Barvenkovo, then Bible School in Tchongrav, Crimea and Winkler, Manitoba

One of the founders of MBBC in Winnipeg, Manitoba

**Unruh, Benjamin Heinrich**

Born 4 September 1881 in Temir-Bulat (Philippstal), Crimea

Parents Heinrich Benjamin Unruh and Elisabeth Wall

Ninth of 10 children, younger brother of Abraham H Unruh

Initial schooling in Temur-Bulat, then after 4 years sent to Tokultschak (Johannesruh)

1895 to *Zentralschule* in Ohrloff, teachers included his uncle, Kornelius Unruh

Teachers College in Halbstadt

Passed Religion and German examinations in Halbstadt

Passed examinations for Russian subjects in Simferopol

Studied in Basel, Switzerland 1900-1907

Married Frieda Hege of Breitenau, Germany in 1907, had 8 children  
Taught Religion and German in the *Ober-Realschule* in Halbstadt, also taught in the  
Halbstadt *Maedchenschule*  
Involved in the negotiations for Mennonite migration to Canada 1923-1928  
Helped in the resettlement of Mennonites from Moscow 1929-1930, and with the Harbin  
refugees  
Wrote a number of books  
Settled in Karlsruhe, Germany  
Died 12 May 1959 in Karlsruhe

**Wiens, Anna**

Worked as a medical nurse in Simferopol in 1915

**Wiens, Heinrich**

Born 25 August 1894 in Halbstadt, Molotschna  
Married **Anastasia Ivanov** 23 January 1918 in Halbstadt  
She was born 3 January 1892  
Must have lived for some time in Simferopol, then back to Halbstadt  
Children:

**Riva Maria** - born 12 April 1920 in Simferopol

Yurie - born 17 February 1922 in Halbstadt

Family immigrated to British Columbia, Canada

**Willms, Maria**

Born 13 April 1873 in Karassan, Crimea  
Parents Gerhard Willms (Willems) and Maria Kaethler  
Maria married Kuzma Davidenko and joined the Orthodox church  
She later rejoined the Busau Mennonite Church  
4 children  
Maria died 27 March 1917 in Simferopol

## BUSINESS AND INSTITUTIONS

There was only one **Mennonite Business** that could be found in Simferopol

### **Peter Reimer**

Advertised in the *Christliche Familienkalendar* on a number of occasions early in the 1900s  
Was the only agent in Russia for Keystone-Elgin watches, American made, durable and accurate  
Also sold wall and cabinet clocks, watch chains, medallions, broaches and rings  
Catalogue available on request

### **Institutions, Services and Businesses used by Mennonites**

#### **Medical Corps**

Unit in Simferopol 1915 had a number of Mennonites  
These included Anna Wiens, Anna Dyck, Helena Kroeker, Abram Friesen

#### **Psychiatric Hospital**

“*Irrenhaus*” used by Mennonites  
Johann Kroeker was a patient there early 1880s until he died in 1906

#### **Hospital**

Mrs Peter Duekmann (nee Thessmann) died in hospital after major surgery in 1902

#### **Dr Muehlenthal Private Surgical and Gynaecological Hospital**

Dr Muehlenthal, general and orthopaedic surgeon; Dr Maurch, eye diseases; Dr Grassmueck, internal and nerve conditions; Dr Weidenbaum, women’s diseases, obstetrics and pediatrics; Dr Lau, ear conditions and respiratory diseases; Dr Petersenn, ear, nose and throat

Prices in the hospital 2, 3 and 5 rubles

The specialists mentioned varied from time to time, but Dr Muehlenthal was always listed  
There was considerable advertising for this hospital in *Christlicher Familienkalendar*

#### **Water Cures**

The private hospital of Dr S Lewin from Vienna had a special department for water cures  
The newest equipment was available for water cures, as well as different types of baths, rubdowns, packing, hot air and steam, hot and cold showers  
Reasonable prices, 2 rubles per day, with 20% reduction on treatments if you stayed in the facility  
Treatment most effective for nerve, stomach and intestinal conditions, womens’ diseases, constipation and severe colds  
Right across the street from the cathedral

#### **University of Simferopol**

1918 to 1924 there was a considerable number of Mennonite students at the University  
There were good professors, partly because they had fled south, away from the Communist north

Students were often unable to go home for the summer holidays because of the Civil War, so they worked in the local Mennonite villages, such as Lustigstal, Karassan, Tchongrav. A Dr Johann Sawatzky in Karassan often helped them with food, but also encouraged them to read his medical books

Mennonites studied Medicine, Philology (languages), Science, Education (teacher training)

There were at least ten medical students about 1920 (nine could be specifically identified)  
(for more personal details see List of People)

**Dyck, Peter** - Karassan, Crimea

**Martins, Anna (Any)** - Montanai Estate, near Eupatoria, Crimea

**Neufeld, Gerhard Jakob** - Davlekanovo, Ufa, brother of Nikolai

**Neufeld, Hermann** - Samara

**Neufeld, Nicholas Jakob** - Davlekanovo, Ufa, brother of Gerhard

**Rempel, Agatha** - Gnadenfeld, Molotschna, sister of Maria

**Rempel, Maria** - Gnadenfeld, Molotschna, sister of Agatha

**Strauss, Johann (Hans)** - Spat, Crimea

**Toews, Aron Johann** - Alexanderthal, Molotschna

There were also a number of students in the Faculty of Education (*Lehrerseminar*)

**Unruh, Abraham Heinrich** - took courses in Russian and Mathematics

In 1924 there were at least 3

**Duerksen, Johann (Hans)** - Crimea

**Schaefer**

**Scharkov, Sergey** - Minlertschik, Crimea



Chirurgisch-  
Gynaekologisches Krankenhaus  
von  
**Dr. Mühlenthal**  
**Simferopol**  
(Новый городъ).

Behandelnde Aerzte.

**Dr. Mühlenthal:** Operation und Orthopädische Chirurgie.

**Dr. Maurach:** Augenkrankheiten.

**Dr. Weidenbaum:** Innere und Frauenkrankheiten, Geburtshilfe.

**Dr. Petersenn:** Ohren-, Nasen- und Halskrankheiten.

**Dr. Grahmüd:** Nervenkrankheiten und innere Krankheiten.

—\*—

Das Krankenhaus hat Zimmer in Preisen von 2, 3, und 5 Rubel für den Tag.

KEYSTONE

Echte amerikanische Uhren

Echte amerikanische Uhren

— KEYSTONE-ELGIN. —

Dauerhaft und pünktlich.  
Einzige Niederlage in Rußland.  
Habe auf Lager ebenfalls  
**Wand- und Cabinet-Uhren**  
amerikanischen Fabrikats,  
**Uhrketten, Medaillonen, Broschen, Ringe**  
und andere **Goldfachen.**

Meinen illustrierten Katalog mit  
Preisen versende ich auf Verlangen  
kostenfrei.

Adresse: **Peter Reimer, Simferopol.**

Peter Reimer advertising in *Christlicher Familienkalender* in 1905

Simferopol.  
**Privat-  
Krankenhaus**  
von Dr. med.  
**S. Lewin.**  
eigenes Haus gegenüber der  
**Kathedralkirche.**

**Wasserkur-**  
Abtheilung  
für hydropatische Kur  
und  
**Massage.**

Neueste Apparate für Wasserkur.  
Verschiedene Bäder, Gießungen,  
Abreibungen, Einpackungen, Heiß-  
luft- u. Dampfbädern, kalte u.  
warme Douchen etc. Preise mäßig;  
für in der Heilanstalt wohnende  
20% Rabatt. Vorzüglicher Nutzen  
bei Nerven-, Magen- und Darm-  
krankheiten, Frauenleiden, Ver-  
stopfung und Verfestung, Catar-  
then, häufiger Gefäßung und  
anderen Leiden.

Betten für Kranke (keine an-  
stehende) mit Pension, Wäsche u.  
Pflege von 2 Rbl. täglich. Opera-  
teur-Chirurg Dr. **Kabulow**, Con-  
sultant Dr. **Betting**. Specieil er-  
bautes Haus, bequeme hygienische  
Einrichtung. Lage im Centrum  
der Stadt.

Water cure at Dr Lewin's private clinic  
and hospital

## Medical Personnel in Simferopol in 1915



Mennonite nurses serving in Simferopol during World War I



Medical Corps in Simferopol 1915. Front row l to r, Anna Wiens, Anna Dyck, the next nurse Helena Kroecker, then Abram Friesen



Mennonite medical students in Simferopol in 1920. l to r back row Hermann Neufeld, Samara; Agatha Rempel, Gnadenfeld; Johann Strauss, Spat; front row Nicholas J Neufeld, Ufa; Maria Rempel (sister of Agatha), Gnadenfeld; Anna Martins, Eupatoria, Crimea; Gerhard Neufeld (brother of Nicholas), Ufa



Students at the *Lehrerseminar* in 1924, back row, 4th from left Sergy Scharkov; captain hat, Schaefer; middle row, white shirt, Johann (Hans) Duerksen



Dr Anna Martins



Dr Anna Martins in the late 1950s  
(age about 60)



Dr Peter Dyck in Brazil



Nicholas Neufeld, medical  
student in 1920



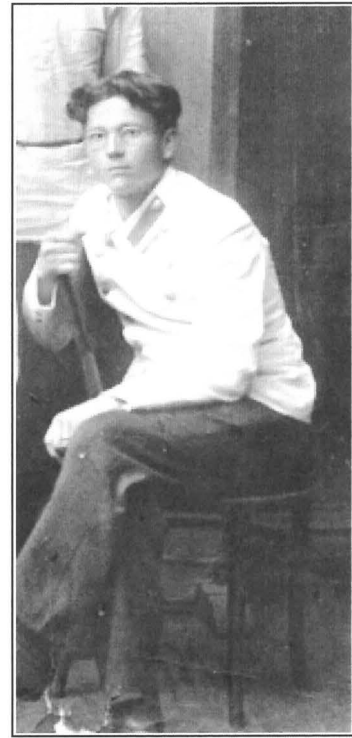
Nicholas and Susanna Neufeld



Dr Nicholas J Neufeld



Gerhard J Neufeld, student



Gerhard Neufeld,  
medical student  
in 1920



Dr Gerhard Neufeld



Johann (Hans) Duerksen



Teacher Duerksen



Anna and Johann Duerksen



Sicherheitskomitee  
der Ukrainischen SSR

-----  
Verwaltung des  
Gebietes Donezk  
vom 8. Februar 1990  
Nr. 10/3-9530-2 f  
Donezk

638142 Kas.SSR  
Gebiet Pawlodar  
Kreis Uspenko  
Kreis Rawnopol  
Mil H.J.

Sehr geehrte Katharina Iwanowna !

Ihr Schreiben an die KGB Verwaltung des Gebiets Donezk  
wurde von uns aufmerksam durchgenommen.

Wir teilen mit, daß DIRKSEN Johann, Sohn des Johann,  
geb.am 19.04.1902, in Schende, Kreis Melitopol, Gebiet  
Dnepropetrowsk, deutscher Nationalität, stellvertretender  
Leiter der Abteilung für Hauptarbeiten der Schacht "Junkom",  
wurde am 17. November 1937 vom Ordshenikidser GO NKWD  
unter unbegründeten Beschuldigungen, daß er angeblich Teilnehmer  
einer "kontrrevolutionären, faschistischen diversions-  
aufständischen Organisation ", verurteilt.

Er wurde beschuldigt laut Ar. 54-6, 54-10, 54-11. und  
auf Grund der Anordnung NKWD UdSSR und des Prokurors der UdSSR  
vom 23. November 1937, wurde Dirksen J.J.zur Todesstrafe  
verurteilt.

Über das Datum des Vollzuges sind in der Archivkriminalakte  
keine Angaben vorhanden, aber es ist bekannt, daß nach den  
Verordnungen die zu jener Zeit existierten, wurden solche Urteile  
sofort nach der fällung ausgeführt.

Angaben über den Bestattungsort sind in den Akten nicht vorhanden  
und es ist unmöglich in der jetzigen Zeit es festzustellen.  
Über weitere Angaben verfügen wir nicht.

Auf Grund der Bestimmung des Gerichtstribunals des Kirower  
Griegsgebietes vom 12. Juni 1959, ist D I R K S E N J.J.  
r e h a b i l i t i e r t worden, wegen fehlendem Tatbestand.  
Wegen der Bescheinigung über die Rehabilitierung wenden sie sich  
an das Kriegstribunal des Kirower Kriegsgebietes.

Leiter der Unterabteilung: Unterschrift  
=====

German translation of "Rehabilitation" letter received by the relatives of Johann Duerksen

## FRANZ TEICHRIEB

[1895 - 1940?]

Franz Teichrieb with his wife Susanna, and children Elvira, Arnold, Anneliese and Gerhard lived in the village of Spat, Crimea. Franz taught geometry and cabinet making in the local high school, but when the collective farm needed his skills, his services were transferred there.

There was no active church in Spat in 1936, there were no Bible studies. Once Franz and his wife sat in their house and sang the old gospel songs. He had really enjoyed that.



The Teichrieb Family in 1932 or 1933

It was November 24, 1936. The first snow had fallen; it was a beautiful evening. Franz suggested to his wife "lets go visit *Tante Gretchen*," who lived at the other end of the village. Franz's mother, Mrs. Elisabeth Wall, watched the children, while he and Susanna walked to their destination.

No sooner were they gone when a policeman came to the door asking for Franz. He was told that the couple had gone for a visit. The policeman came back in half an hour, this time with a German shepherd police dog. Franz was still not at home. Would the Teichriebs be drinking, Mrs. Wall was asked. No, she said, but since they were staying such a long time they were obviously having a good time.

Finally returning home, Franz wanted to stop in at his cabinet shop to check his tools, but the police saw him on the street, and told him not to bother. This time there were two policemen. They escorted Franz into the house and told him to put his hands up. The whole family had to sit around the table while the police searched the house. They found a picture of Elvira as a small girl, but after some pleading, left it with the family. They told Susanna to get Franz some warm clothing, blankets and a pillow. Then, by this time about 11 PM, Franz was ordered to go with the two policemen.

Susanna cried. Franz said goodbye, that the family should be brave and not worry. When Franz and the policemen were gone the family moved all their beds together – feeling slight comfort with the close company.

Franz was taken to a prison in Simferopol. The crimes he was accused of were singing religious songs and receiving mail from Canada. Susanna went to visit him periodically, usually taking along food, with leaves of the Bible tucked in. The eldest daughter, Elvira, went along on one occasion. They were in the same room, but there were



**SOURCES**  
(for the entire Simferopol chapter)

*Der Bote*

Obituaries:

Dyck, Dr Peter, 15 July 1987, p 6; 9 September 1987

Durksen, Kaethe, personal interview

Durksen, Martin, *Die Krim war unsere Heimat*, self-published, Winnipeg, Canada, 1977, many pages

Ediger, Katharina, *Under His Wings: Events in the Lives of Elder Alexander Ediger and His Family*, self-published, edited by Elisabeth Schulz, translated by Mark Backmann, Kitchener, Ontario, Canada, 1994, pp 39-77

Goerz, H, *Mennonite Settlements in Crimea*, Echo Historical Series, translated from German by John B Toews, CMBC Publications, Winnipeg, Canada, 1992, pp 50-53

Hofer, D M, *Die Hungersnot in Russland und Unsere Reise um die Welt*, K M B Publishing House, Chicago, Illinois, 1924, p 347

Huebert, Helmut T, *Events and People: Events In Russian Mennonite History And The People That Made Them Happen*, Springfield Publishers, Winnipeg, Canada, 1999, pp 197-200, 214-15

Loewen (nee Teichrieb), Elvira, personal interview

Lohrenz, Gerhard, *Heritage Remembered: A pictorial survey of Mennonites in Prussia and Russia*, CMBC Publications, Winnipeg, Manitoba, 1974, pp 86, 131, 187

*Mennonitische Rundschau*

News Report:

8 March 1902, p 2

Refugee Lists: many pages

Seeking Food Packages: many pages

Neufeld family information

Quiring, Walter, and Bartel, Helen, *Als Ihre Zeit erfuehlt war*, self-published, Saskatoon, Saskatchewan, 1963, p 103

Schroeder, William, Huebert, Helmut T, *Mennonite Historical Atlas*, second edition, Springfield Publishers, Winnipeg, Canada, 1996, p 28

Teichrieb, Anneliese, personal interview

Toews, J B, *JB A Twentieth-Century Mennonite Pilgrim*, Center for Mennonite Brethren Studies, Fresno, California, 1995, pp 17-19, 104

Westwood, J N, *A History of Russian Railways*, George Allen and Unwin Ltd, London, 1964, pp 64, 302

# **INDEX OF ALL PEOPLE LISTED AS LIVING IN THE CITIES OF IMPERIAL RUSSIA**

This does not include parents, children, or relatives who, on reasonable assumption, did not actually live in the city  
Unless specifically mentioned, spouses, particularly wives, are not listed, although one could assume that most often they were present

When a child is listed as being born, but there is no information about parents, it is assumed that there must have been a father and a mother living in the city

Married women are listed under their maiden name, followed by their married name in brackets

If their maiden name is not known, women are listed under their married name

If the given names of people are not known, they are listed as Mr, Mrs, Son, Daughter, Child or Children

When the term "Children" is used we have assumed that this means at least 2 children for statistical purposes

Where the names are the identical, the order in the index follows the order in which they occur in the text

## **A**

Abrahams, Helena (Friesen), 96  
Abrams, Jacob E, 71  
Abrams, Katharina E, 71, 161  
Albrecht, Abram, 71, 378  
Albrecht, Abram Abram, 71, 378  
Albrecht, Anna (Neufeld), 7  
Albrecht, Elisabeth (Doerksen), 7  
Albrecht, Franz, 7  
Albrecht, Heinrich, 7  
Albrecht, Heinrich, 71, 378  
Albrecht, Jakob, 7  
Albrecht, Margaretha (Penner), 7  
Albrecht, Margaretha, 7  
Albrecht, Nikolai, 7  
Albrecht, Nikolai, 7  
Albrecht, Nikolai, 7  
Albrecht, Peter, 71, 375, 378, 382  
Albrecht, Peter, 71, 378  
Albrecht, Susanna, 7

## **B**

Bahnmann, Abram, 73, 165  
Bahnmann, Anna, 72, 165  
Bahnmann, Anna, 73, 165  
Bahnmann, Anna (Bartel), 73  
Bahnmann, Anna (Dyck), 120  
Bahnmann, Aron, 72, 165  
Bahnmann, Cornelius, 72, 165  
Bahnmann, Cornelius, 72  
Bahnmann, Cornelius, 72  
Bahnmann, Cornelius Cornelius, 72, 165  
Bahnmann, Elisabeth, 120  
Bahnmann, Franz, 72, 165  
Bahnmann, Heinrich, 72, 165  
Bahnmann, Heinrich, 121  
Bahnmann, Heinrich Peter, 73, 120, 152, 161

Bahnmann, Helena, 72, 165  
Bahnmann, Helena (Nickel), 73, 168  
Bahnmann, Henrietta (Rempel), 120  
Bahnmann, Jakob, 72  
Bahnmann, Jakob, 72, 165  
Bahnmann, Jakob, 72, 165  
Bahnmann, Jakob, 72, 165  
Bahnmann, Jakob, 73  
Bahnmann, Johann, 72, 165  
Bahnmann, Justina (Unger), 73, 165  
Bahnmann, Katharina, 72, 165  
Bahnmann, Katharina, 120  
Bahnmann, Katharina (Fehr), 73, 165  
Bahnmann, Margaretha (Epp), 120  
Bahnmann, Margaretha (Sudermann), 73, 165  
Bahnmann, Maria, 120  
Bahnmann, Maria (Friesen), 73  
Bahnmann, Maria (Giesbrecht), 74  
Bahnmann, Maria (Rempel), 120  
Bahnmann, Nikolai, 120  
Bahnmann, Peter, 72, 165  
Bahnmann, Peter, 73, 165  
Bahnmann, Peter, 73, 161  
Bahnmann, Peter Jakob, 53, 73, 161  
Bahnmann, Susanna, 72, 165  
Balzer, Franz, 360  
Balzer, Mr, 360  
Balzer, Mrs, 360  
Bartel, David, 73, 161  
Bartel, Heinrich, 74  
Bartel, Heinrich, 74

Bartel, Helena, 74  
Bartel, Helena (Cornelsen), 74  
Bartel, Maria, 74  
Bartel, Peter, 74  
Bartel, Wilhelm, 75, 158, 195  
Berg, Franz, 75  
Berg, Gerhard, 266  
Berg, Gerhard, 266  
Berg, Heinrich, 75  
Berg, Heinrich, 266  
Berg, Isaak, 75  
Berg, Isaak, 266  
Berg, Jakob, 54, 75, 171  
Berg, Johann, 266  
Berg, Justina Heinrich, 266  
Berg, Katharina, 75  
Berg, Katharina, 266  
Berg, Katharina, 266  
Berg, Katharina (Lohrenz), 112  
Berg, Margaretha, 266  
Berg, Margaretha, 266  
Berg, Maria, 266  
Berg, Maria, 266  
Berg, Peter, 75  
Berg, Susanna, 75  
Berg, Susanna, 75  
Berg, Wilhelm, 75  
Bergen, Abraham, 379  
Bergen, Aganetha, 75, 166  
Bergen, Anna, 75, 166  
Bergen, Bernhard, 231  
Bergen, Children (3), 231  
Bergen, Cornelius, 379, 383  
Bergen, Elisabeth, 75, 166  
Bergen, Gerhard, 75, 166  
Bergen, Gerhard, 379  
Bergen, Gerhard Gerhard, 375, 378, 382, 384  
Bergen, Heinrich, 379

Bergen, Helena (Janzen), 75, 166  
 Bergen, Isaak, 379  
 Bergen, Jakob, 75, 166  
 Bergen, Jakob, 379  
 Bergen, Johann, 379  
 Bergen, Katharina, 75, 166  
 Bergen, Katharina, 379  
 Bergen, Kornelius, 379  
 Bergen, Maria, 75, 166  
 Bergen, Mrs, 231  
 Bergen, Peter, 379  
 Bergen, Peter, 379  
 Bergen, Sarah, 75, 166  
 Bergen, von, Helena (Esau), 91  
 Bickert, Margaretha (Dyck), 270  
 Boldt, Heinrich, 231  
 Boldt, Johann, 231  
 Boldt, Mrs, 231  
 Bonnellis, J, 231, 245  
 Born, Children (3), 266  
 Born, Martin Isaak, 266  
 Born, Mrs, 266  
 Brauer, Elsie (Thielmann), 76  
 Brauer, Helena (Lena) (Dyck), 76  
 Brauer, Nikolai, 76  
 Brauer, Nikolai Erdmann, 76  
 Brauer, Mr, 76  
 Brauer, Mrs, 76  
 Brauer, Maria (Harder), 76  
 Braun, Anna (Schroeder), 290, 298  
 Braun, Heinrich, 76  
 Braun, Heinrich, 415  
 Braun, Johann, 415  
 Braun, Johann, 415  
 Braun, Katharina, 415  
 Braun, Kornelius, 266, 291, 311  
 Braun, Mrs, 266  
 Brucks Family, 2 females, 1 male, 8  
 Buhler, Abraham, 76, 166  
 Buhler, Bernhard, 76, 166  
 Buhler, Bernhard Abraham, 76, 159, 161, 166, 170  
 Buhler, Elisabeth (Enns), 77, 166  
 Buhler, Jakob Abraham, 54, 77, 157, 171, 184  
 Buhler, Johann, 77, 166  
 Buhler, Justina, 77  
 Buhler, Maria (Penner), 77, 116  
 Buhler, Maria (Wall), 76, 166  
 Buller, Abram, 266

Buller, Franz, 266  
 Buller, Jakob, 266  
 Buller, Jakob Andreas, 266  
 Buller, Katharina, 266  
 Buller, Peter, 266  
**C**  
 Claassen, Abraham, 78  
 Claassen, Adelgrunde (Quiring), 118  
 Claassen, Anna, 78  
 Claassen, Bernhard, 77, 171  
 Claassen, Cornelius, 54, 78  
 Claassen, Helena, 78  
 Claassen, Jakob, 77  
 Claassen, Johann, 78  
 Claassen, Margareta, 77  
 Cornies, Helene, 415  
 Cornies, Johann, 53, 143, 387, 393, 409, 415  
 Cornies, Olga (Neufeld), 238  
**D**  
 Daniels, Children (2), 231  
 Daniels, Gerhard Peter, 231  
 Daniels, Mrs, 231  
 DeFehr, Abram, 267  
 DeFehr, Abram, 267  
 DeFehr, Abram, 268, 304, 331-337  
 DeFehr, Abram Abram (Sr), 259, 260, 262, 266, 295, 295, 304, 308, 329-337  
 DeFehr, Abram Abram (Jr), 262, 267, 295, 298, 299, 304, 308, 314, 329-337  
 DeFehr, Cornelius, 268, 304, 331-337  
 DeFehr, Cornelius Abram, 259, 260, 262, 265, 267, 268, 292, 295, 299, 304, 305, 308, 309, 310, 311, 315, 316, 317, 319-326, 328, 329-337, 341-349  
 DeFehr, Elisabeth (Fast), 268, 304, 319-326  
 DeFehr, Franz, 78  
 DeFehr, Franz Abram, 267, 269, 295, 296, 330-337  
 DeFehr, Heinrich Abram, 267, 269, 295, 296, 299, 304, 308, 314, 330  
 DeFehr, Helena, 268, 331  
 DeFehr, Helena (Ewert), 267

DeFehr, Helena (Janzen) (Penner), 282, 295, 329-337  
 DeFehr, Johann, 78  
 DeFehr, Johann, 78  
 DeFehr, Johann, 267  
 DeFehr, Katharina Abram (Klassen), 267, 278, 295, 299, 304, 329-337  
 DeFehr, Margaretha (Reimer), 267, 295, 304, 330  
 DeFehr, Maria Abram (Peters), 267, 283, 295, 330  
 DeFehr, Sarah (Dick), 78  
 DeFehr, Susanna, 269, 330  
 DeFehr, Wilhelm, 268, 331  
 DeFehr, Wilhelm, 268, 304, 331-337  
 Derksen, Aganetha (Klassen), 19, 29  
 Derksen, David, 8, 32, 35  
 Derksen, Jakob, 78, 161  
 Derksen, Katharina (Klassen), 19, 29  
 Derksen, Nikolai, 78  
 Dick, Anna (Sudermann), 137  
 Dick, J, 8, 32  
 Dick, Jakob, 78  
 Dick, Jakob, 360, 370  
 Dick, Margareta (Derksen), 78  
 Dick, Mr, 375, 379, 382  
 Dick, Mrs, 78  
 Dick, Peter Franz, 79, 160  
 Dick, Peter Heinrich, 8  
 Dirks, Anna, 79  
 Dirks, Alexander Peter, 360, 369  
 Dirks, David, 79, 161  
 Dirks, Maria, 79, 161  
 Dirks, Nicholas Peter, 360, 369  
 Doerksen, Aganetha (Epp) (Thiessen), 80  
 Doerksen, Aganetha (Isaak), 274  
 Doerksen, Agnes (Ediger), 79, 85  
 Doerksen, Anna (Ewert), 92  
 Doerksen, Child (1), 231  
 Doerksen, Children (5), 231  
 Doerksen, David David, 231  
 Doerksen, Elisabeth, 79  
 Doerksen, H, 79, 164  
 Doerksen, Jakob, 79  
 Doerksen, Jakob, 56, 79, 171, 176  
 Doerksen, Jakob David, 231



Doerksen, Johann Jakob, 57, 79, 163, 164  
 Doerksen, Margaretha (Voth), 79  
 Doerksen, Mrs, 231  
 Doerksen, Mrs, 231  
 Doerksen, Peter, 80  
 Doerksen, Sara (Neufeld), 80  
 Dueck, Anna (Wiebe), 8  
 Dueck, Arnold, 81  
 Dueck, Bernhard Bernhard, 8, 26, 35  
 Dueck, Bernhard Bernhard, 9  
 Dueck, Cornelius, 80  
 Dueck, Daughter (Wiebe), 82  
 Dueck, David Johann, 81  
 Dueck, Franz Isaac, 80  
 Dueck, Gerhard, 81, 172  
 Dueck, Gertruda (Neufeld), 114  
 Dueck, Heinrich Heinrich, 269  
 Dueck, Helene, 9, 26  
 Dueck, Helena (Brauer), 76  
 Dueck, Helena (Dueck), 81  
 Dueck, Helena (Fast), 81  
 Dueck, Isaac, 82  
 Dueck, Isaak, 81, 161, 171, 172  
 Dueck, Jakob, 80  
 Dueck, Jakob, 81, 161  
 Dueck, Jakob, 232  
 Dueck, Jakob Johann, 82  
 Dueck, Johann, 82, 161  
 Dueck, Johann, 232  
 Dueck, Johann Johann, 231  
 Dueck, Katharina, 9  
 Dueck, Katharina (Froese), 15, 26  
 Dueck, Leopold, 81  
 Dueck, Margaretha, 232  
 Dueck, Maria (Albrecht), 71, 378  
 Dueck, Maria (Baergen), 80  
 Dueck, Mr, 82  
 Dueck, Mr, 360  
 Dueck, Mrs, 82  
 Dueck, Mrs, 82  
 Dueck, Sarah (Froese), 9, 26  
 Dueck, Victor, 81  
 Duerksen, Jakob, 82  
 Duerksen, Jakob, 82  
 Duerksen, Johann (Hans), 232, 415, 426, 429, 433, 434  
 Dyck, Aganetha, P, 269  
 Dyck, Agatha, 270  
 Dyck, Agathe, 271, 321

Dyck, Agathe, 271, 304, 321-326, 328  
 Dyck, Agnes, 269  
 Dyck, Agnes, 270, 297  
 Dyck, Amalie (Bock), 271, 304, 321-326, 328  
 Dyck, Anna, 9  
 Dyck, Anna, 82, 164  
 Dyck, Anna, 271, 319  
 Dyck, Anna, 416, 425, 428  
 Dyck, Arthur, 271  
 Dyck, David Isaak, 270, 311, 318, 322, 323  
 Dyck, Elisabeth (DeFehr), 259, 268, 271, 295, 299, 304, 311, 319-326, 328, 329-337  
 Dyck, Elisabeth (Ediger), 417  
 Dyck, Franz, 57, 83, 157  
 Dyck, Gerhard, 83  
 Dyck, Gerhard, 270  
 Dyck, Gerhard, 272, 321  
 Dyck, Helena (Rempel), 288  
 Dyck, Helena (Riediger), 289, 304, 319-326, 328  
 Dyck, Isaak, 83  
 Dyck, Johann, 9  
 Dyck, Katharina, 83, 164  
 Dyck, Katharina (Ediger), 67, 83, 206-213, 416  
 Dyck, Katharina (Heese), 270, 297  
 Dyck, Katharina (Klassen), 271, 278, 296, 301, 319-326, 328  
 Dyck, Katharina (Penner), 283  
 Dyck, M, 83, 164  
 Dyck, Margaretha, 269  
 Dyck, Margaretha, 270, 297  
 Dyck, Margaretha (Neufeld), 420  
 Dyck, Maria, 9  
 Dyck, Maria (Martens), 280, 304, 305, 319-326, 328, 339-349  
 Dyck, Maria (Thiessen), 270, 297  
 Dyck, Mrs, 83  
 Dyck, Mrs, 416  
 Dyck, Nikolai, 270, 297  
 Dyck, Nikolai, 270  
 Dyck, Nikolai, 270, 297  
 Dyck, Paul, 9  
 Dyck, Peter, 416, 426, 430  
 Dyck, Peter Peter, 271  
 Dyck, Susanna (DeFehr), 269, 330

Dyck, Susanna (Dyck), 271, 296, 299, 320-326, 328  
 Dyck, Wilhelm, 270, 299, 320  
 Dyck, Wilhelm, 271, 304, 321-326, 328  
 Dyck, Wilhelm Isaak, 258, 259, 260, 262, 271, 292, 300, 301, 303, 304, 308-312, 315-317, 318-328, 330-337, 340, 341

## E

Ediger, A P, 67, 83, 175  
 Ediger, Abraham, 85  
 Ediger, Abram Salomon, 83, 161, 171, 203  
 Ediger, Agnes Peter, 83, 85  
 Ediger, Alexander Heinrich, 83, 203, 204, 206-213, 416  
 Ediger, Anna, 84  
 Ediger, Casik, 417  
 Ediger, Children (2), 232  
 Ediger, David David, 272, 308  
 Ediger, Elisabeth (Lisa), 85  
 Ediger, Elisabeth (Liese) (Lehn), 111  
 Ediger, Elisabeth (Sudermann), 136, 169  
 Ediger, Else, 417  
 Ediger, Frieda, 417  
 Ediger, Harry, 84, 204, 417  
 Ediger, Harry, 209, 210, 213, 416  
 Ediger, Heinrich, 417  
 Ediger, Heinrich Abram, 55-57, 67, 83, 84, 157, 160, 171-173, 177, 203-213  
 Ediger, Helene (Kliwer), 272  
 Ediger, Katharina Dagmar, 83, 207-213, 416  
 Ediger, Kornelius, 356, 361, 370  
 Ediger, Luise (Thiessen), 272  
 Ediger, Maria, 85  
 Ediger, Maria (Unrau), 292, 423  
 Ediger, Mr, 272, 308  
 Ediger, Mrs, 83  
 Ediger, Mrs, 417  
 Ediger, Nikolai, 85  
 Ediger, Peter, 85, 161  
 Ediger, Peter Abraham, 85  
 Ediger, Peter Abram, 85, 173, 175  
 Ediger, Peter Peter, 85



Ediger, Sara, 85  
 Ediger, Salomon Salomon, 232  
 Ediger, Th, 86  
 Ediger, Theodor, 84, 204, 417  
 Ediger, Willmar, 417  
 Eitzen, Aganetha (Holzrichter), 361  
 Eitzen, Aganetha (Rempel), 366  
 Eitzen, Agatha (Sawatzky), 86  
 Eitzen, Agathe, 87  
 Eitzen, Anna (Schmidt) (Schmidt), 361  
 Eitzen, Anna (Siemens), 86  
 Eitzen, Bertha, 86  
 Eitzen, Bertha, 87  
 Eitzen, Children (3), 361  
 Eitzen, Daniel, 86  
 Eitzen, Daniel Daniel, 86  
 Eitzen, David, 86  
 Eitzen, David Jakob, 86  
 Eitzen, Gerhard, 87  
 Eitzen, Helena, 86  
 Eitzen, Helena (Eitzen), 361  
 Eitzen, Helena (Quiring), 87  
 Eitzen, Jakob, 86  
 Eitzen, Jakob, 87  
 Eitzen, Johann, 86  
 Eitzen, Johann, 87  
 Eitzen, Johann Daniel, 361, 370  
 Eitzen, K, 9  
 Eitzen, Kornelius, 87  
 Eitzen, Kornelius, 361, 370  
 Eitzen, Kornelius Daniel, 361  
 Eitzen, Margaretha, 361  
 Eitzen, Maria (Holzrichter), 361  
 Eitzen, Maria (Janzen), 86  
 Eitzen, Peter, 87  
 Enns, Abraham, 87  
 Enns, Abraham, 88  
 Enns, Abram, 87, 161  
 Enns, Anna, 89  
 Enns, Anna (Harder), 101  
 Enns, Anna (Neufeld), 365  
 Enns, Children (at least 2), 233  
 Enns, David, 88  
 Enns, Dietrich, 89  
 Enns, Elisabeth, 89  
 Enns, Elisabeth (Lisa) Rempel, 87  
 Enns, George (Gerhard?), 87  
 Enns, Gerhard, 89  
 Enns, Heinrich, 88

Enns, Isaak, 54, 87, 172  
 Enns, Isaak, 88  
 Enns, Isaak, 220, 232, 244, 251  
 Enns, J K, 233, 251  
 Enns, Jacob, 88  
 Enns, Jakob, 87  
 Enns, Jakob, 87  
 Enns, Jakob, 87, 166, 170  
 Enns, Jakob, 88, 166  
 Enns, Jakob, 232  
 Enns, Johann, 88  
 Enns, Johann, 88  
 Enns, Johann, 89  
 Enns, Katharina (Katie), 87  
 Enns, Margaretha, 88  
 Enns, Margaretha (Voth), 88, 166  
 Enns, Maria (Schroeder) (Unruh), 88  
 Enns, Mrs, 233  
 Enns, Peter, 88  
 Enns, Peter, 88  
 Enns, Sisters (2), 87  
 Enns, Susanna, 232  
 Enns, Susanna, 232  
 Enns, Susanna (Hiebert), 104, 167  
 Ennsz, Heinrich, 89  
 Entz, Abraham, 89, 166  
 Entz, Abraham, 89, 166, 170  
 Entz, Aganetha, 89, 166  
 Entz, Agathe, 89, 166  
 Entz, Isaak, 89, 166  
 Entz, Isaak Abraham, 89  
 Entz, Jakob, 89, 166  
 Entz, Johann, 89, 166  
 Entz, Katharina, 90  
 Entz, Katharina, 90  
 Entz, Margaretha, 89, 166  
 Entz, Margaretha (Janzen), 90  
 Entz, Maria, 89, 166  
 Entz, Maria, 90  
 Epp, Aganetha Heinrich (Doerksen), 80  
 Epp, David, 90  
 Epp, David, 90  
 Epp, David Heinrich, 57, 90, 154, 157, 159, 164, 171, 204, 207, 210  
 Epp, Elisabeth (Dirks), 79  
 Epp, Heinrich, 9, 35  
 Epp, Heinrich, 90  
 Epp, Helena (Klassen), 277

Epp, Katharina (Braun), 415  
 Epp, Marie, 58, 91  
 Epp, Peter, 9, 31  
 Esau, Cornelius, 233  
 Esau, Cornelius, 233  
 Esau, Elisabeth (Klassen), 236  
 Esau, Gerhard Jakob, 91  
 Esau, Heinrich, 91  
 Esau, Heinrich, 91  
 Esau, Helena, 233  
 Esau, Jacob, 91  
 Esau, Johann, 91  
 Esau, Katharina (Martens), 113 419  
 Esau, Maria, 92  
 Esau, Victor, 233  
 Esau, Wilhelm, 233  
 Ewert (Daughter) (Wiens), 92  
 Ewert, Gerhard, 92  
 Ewert, Mrs, 92  
 Ewert, Wilhelm P, 92, 161  
 Ewert, Wilhelm Wilhelm, 92  
**F**  
 Falk, Anna, 92  
 Falk, Anna, 92, 151  
 Falk, Helena, 92  
 Falk, Helena, 92, 151  
 Falk, Jakob, 92  
 Falk, Maria, 9  
 Falk, Mr, 92  
 Falk, Mr, 92  
 Falk, Mr, 92  
 Falk, Mrs, 92  
 Falk, Mrs, 92  
 Falk, Son, 9  
 Fast, Agatha (Eitzen), 86  
 Fast, Alexander, 273  
 Fast, Alexander Johann, 272, 301  
 Fast, Anna, 93  
 Fast, Annemarie, 93  
 Fast, David, 54, 93, 158, 161, 172  
 Fast, Elisabeth, 93  
 Fast, Elisabeth, 273  
 Fast, Gerhard, 93  
 Fast, Gerhard, 93  
 Fast, Gerhard Gerhard, 93  
 Fast, Helena (Eitzen), 86  
 Fast, Isaak, 273  
 Fast, Isaak, 273  
 Fast, Johann, 93  
 Fast, Johann, 220, 233, 242, 244

Fast, Katharina, 93  
 Fast, Katharina, 93  
 Fast, Katharina, 93  
 Fast, Margaretha (Bahnmann), 72  
     165  
 Fast, Maria, 93  
 Fast, Maria D, 93  
 Fast, Mathilda (Epp), 90  
 Fast, Mr, 93  
 Fast, Mrs, 233, 242  
 Fast, Peter Peter, 57, 94, 160,  
     177  
 Fast, Susanna (Friesen), 393  
 Fast, Viktor, 93  
 Fast, Waldo, 273  
 Federau, Anna, 94, 164  
 Federau, Elisabeth, 94, 151  
 Federau, Heinrich, 58, 94  
 Federau, Mr, 94  
 Federau, Mrs, 94  
 Fehderau, Aaron, 94  
 Fehderau, Abram, 95  
 Fehderau, Anni, 95  
 Fehderau, Aron Jakob, 94, 161  
 Fehderau, Elisabeth L  
     (Sudermann), 140  
 Fehderau, Franz, J, 95  
 Fehderau, Heinrich Jakob, 95,  
     164  
 Fehderau, Jakob, 95  
 Fehderau, Jakob Johann, 95, 161  
 Fehderau, Jakob Johann, 95  
 Fehderau, Johann, 95, 161  
 Fehderau, Peter, 95  
 Fehderau, Peter Jakob, 417  
 Fehderau, Salomon, 94  
 Fehderau, Salomon, 95, 161  
 Franz, Helene (Lenzmann), 111  
 Franz, Jakob Jakob, 96  
 Friesen, Abraham, 96  
 Friesen, Abraham Cornelius, 96  
 Friesen, Abram, 417, 425, 428  
 Friesen, Amalia, 97  
 Friesen, Anna, 97  
 Friesen, Anna, 98  
 Friesen, Anna, 234  
 Friesen, Anna, 234  
 Friesen, Anna, 364  
 Friesen, Bernhard, 233  
 Friesen, Children (3), 98  
 Friesen, Claudia, 273  
 Friesen, Cornelius, 96, 159, 161

Friesen, D, 380  
 Friesen, David Peter, 96, 164  
 Friesen, Dirk, 233  
 Friesen, Emil, 97  
 Friesen, Emilie (Ediger), 84, 98,  
     204-208  
 Friesen, Gerhard, 96  
 Friesen, Gerhard, 98  
 Friesen, Gertrude, 234  
 Friesen, Heinrich, 96  
 Friesen, Heinrich, 273  
 Friesen, Heinrich Bernhard, 97  
 Friesen, Heinrich Kornelius, 96,  
     98, 161  
 Friesen, Helena, 96  
 Friesen, Helena, 98  
 Friesen, Helena (Eitzen), 86  
 Friesen, Hermann, 97, 161  
 Friesen, Hermann, 97  
 Friesen, Isbrand Hermann, 73  
 Friesen, Isbrand Isbrand, 53, 55,  
     67, 97, 153, 158, 161, 172, 180  
 Friesen, Isbrand Johann, 273  
 Friesen, J, 98, 172  
 Friesen, Jacob, 98  
 Friesen, Johann, 96  
 Friesen, Johann Isbrand, 273  
 Friesen, Julius, 233  
 Friesen, Julius Julius, 233, 251  
 Friesen, Katharina, 97  
 Friesen, Katharina, 233  
 Friesen, Katharina, 233  
 Friesen, Katharina, 234  
 Friesen, Katharina (Katie)  
     (Krehbiel), 96  
 Friesen, Katharina (Rempel), 97  
 Friesen, Katharina (Riesen, von),  
     131, 169  
 Friesen, Kornelius, 96  
 Friesen, Kornelius, 98  
 Friesen, Lilli, 233  
 Friesen, Louise, 97  
 Friesen, Luise, 234  
 Friesen, M, Mrs, 98  
 Friesen, Malvine, 97  
 Friesen, Margaretha (Albrecht), 7  
 Friesen, Maria, 96  
 Friesen, Maria, 96  
 Friesen, Maria, 98, 151  
 Friesen, Maria, 233  
 Friesen, Maria, 273  
 Friesen, Martha, 98

Friesen, Mr, 98  
 Friesen, Mr, 98  
 Friesen, Mrs, 97  
 Friesen, Mrs, 98  
 Friesen, Mrs, 98  
 Friesen, Mrs, 98  
 Friesen, Mrs, 273, 311, 324  
 Friesen, Olga, 273  
 Friesen, Olga, 393, 397  
 Friesen, Paul, 393, 397, 403  
 Friesen, Peter, 96  
 Friesen, Peter, 98, 161  
 Friesen, Peter, 233  
 Friesen, Peter, 234  
 Friesen, Peter Julius, 234  
 Friesen, Peter Martin, 388, 393,  
     394, 395, 396-404  
 Friesen, Peter Peter, 234  
 Friesen, Sara, 96  
 Friesen, Sarah, 273  
 Friesen, Selma, 97  
 Friesen, Selma, 97  
 Friesen, Susanna, 233  
 Friesen, Susanna (Janzen), 393,  
     397  
 Friesen, Wilhelm, 273  
 Friesen, Wilhelm J, 258, 259,  
     262, 273, 308, 310, 311, 321,  
     322, 324  
 Froese, Abram, 9, 32  
 Froese, Agatha, 14  
 Froese, Agatha, 18, 28  
 Froese, Agatha (Epp), 17  
 Froese, Anna (Enns), 10  
 Froese, Anna (Janzen), 13  
 Froese, Aron Peter, 9, 26  
 Froese, Bernhard Peter, 10, 26  
 Froese, David Peter, 11, 26  
 Froese, Daughter, 15  
 Froese, Daughter, 273  
 Froese, Emma, 18  
 Froese, Franz, 12  
 Froese, Franz Abraham, 11  
 Froese, Franz Peter, 12  
 Froese, Gerhard, 14  
 Froese, Gerhard Peter, 1, 13, 27,  
     31, 32, 33, 35, 38, 46  
 Froese, Heinrich, 14  
 Froese, Helena (Lena), 18, 28  
 Froese, Helena (Klassen), 16  
 Froese, Hilda, 11  
 Froese, Jakob, 14, 32

Froese, Jakob Kornelius, 14, 35  
 Froese, Jakob Peter, 14, 26, 37  
 Froese, Johann, 10  
 Froese, Johann (Hans), 11  
 Froese, Johann, 16  
 Froese, Johann Peter, 15, 26, 28, 35  
 Froese, Katharina, 16  
 Froese, Katharina, 18, 28  
 Froese, Katharina J (Lepp), 21  
 Froese, Katharina (Reimer), 13  
 Froese, Kornelius, 11  
 Froese, Kornelius Peter, 16, 26  
 Froese, Maria, 13  
 Froese, Peter, 11  
 Froese, Peter, 16  
 Froese, Peter, 17  
 Froese, Peter, 18  
 Froese, Peter, 18  
 Froese, Peter Peter, 1, 17, 27, 32, 33, 35, 38  
 Froese, Susannah (Teichrieb), 14  
 Froese, Tina, 273, 296  
 Funk, Johann, 98, 161

## G

Gadsky, Heinrich Adolf, 273  
 Gerbrandt, Bernhard, 99  
 Giesbrecht, Anna, 234  
 Giesbrecht, Anna, 234  
 Giesbrecht, Anna (Wiede), 293  
 Giesbrecht, Elfrieda, 234  
 Giesbrecht, Harry, 234  
 Giesbrecht, Heinrich, 234  
 Giesbrecht, Louise, 234  
 Giesbrecht, Viktor, 234  
 Goertz, Mr, 274, 300  
 Goertzen, Katharina (Froese), 9  
 Goerz, Agnes (Klassen), 19  
 Goerz, David, 99, 186, 204  
 Goossen, Heinrich, 99  
 Goossen, Heinrich, 99  
 Goossen, Katharina, 144  
 Goossen, Katharina (Wall), (Gross), 144  
 Goossen, Maria, 99  
 Gorsching, Jakob, 99  
 Gorsching, Katharina, 99  
 Graewe, Helena (Warkentin), 241  
 Graewe, Maria (Harder), 101  
 Greaves, Amy Evelyn (Sudermann), 137, 153, 172  
 Greaves, Emilie Victoria

(Sudermann), 138, 164, 172  
 Guenter, Children (2), 274  
 Guenter, Mrs H, 274, 301  
 Guenther, Child, 100  
 Guenther, Daughter, 100, 148  
 Guenther, Dietrich, 100, 148, 161, 172  
 Guenther, Dietrich, 100, 148  
 Guenther, Dietrich, 100, 148  
 Guenther, Heinrich, 100  
 Guenther, Maria (Bahnmann), 73, 100, 241  
 Guenther, Michael, 100  
 Guenther, Mr, 100, 172, 179  
 Guenther, Nikolai, 100, 148  
 Guenther, Son, 100  
 Guenther, Son, 100  
 Gutjahr, Paulina (Wall), 381

## H

Hamm, Anna (Epp), 90  
 Hamm, Bernhard, 101  
 Hamm, Gerhard, 101  
 Hamm, Helena, 101  
 Hamm, Jakob, 101  
 Hamm, Johann, 101  
 Hamm, Johann, 101  
 Hamm, Maria (Esau), 233  
 Hamm, Peter, 100  
 Hamm, Peter, 101  
 Harder, Abraham, 101  
 Harder, Abraham Jakob, 101, 102  
 Harder, Anna (Rempel), 101  
 Harder, Barbara, 101, 161  
 Harder, Children (6), 101  
 Harder, Helena (Riesen, von), 130  
 Harder, Jakob, 101  
 Harder, Jakob Abraham, 101  
 Harder, Johann, 102  
 Harder, Margaretha, 101, 102  
 Harder, Margaretha (Entz), 89, 102  
 Harder, Maria (Epp), 101  
 Harder, Maria (Harder), 102  
 Harder, Nikolai, 102, 161  
 Harder, Widow P, 274, 301  
 Harder, Peter, 274  
 Harms, Elisabeth, 18  
 Harms, Mr, 18  
 Harms, Mrs, 18  
 Heckmann, Johann, 274  
 Heese, Elisabeth (Riediger), 127

Heidebrecht, D, 102, 164  
 Heidebrecht, Gerhard Peter, 103, 164  
 Heidebrecht, J, 103, 164  
 Heidebrecht, Kornelius, 103, 164  
 Heidebrecht, Susanna (Suse), 103, 164  
 Heinrichs, Abraham, 418  
 Heinrichs, Agatha (Rempel), 125  
 Heinrichs, Albert, 103  
 Heinrichs, Elfriede (Kerber), 103  
 Heinrichs, Jakob, 103  
 Heinrichs, Jakob, 362  
 Heinrichs, Jakob Jakob, 103  
 Heinrichs, Kornelius, 356, 362, 370  
 Heinrichs, Maria, 362  
 Heinrichs, Rita (Schuller), 103  
 Heinrichs, Susanna (Neufeld), 114  
 Heinrichs, Susanna (Riediger), 128, 206, 207  
 Hepting, Elisabeth (Klassen), 274  
 Hepting, Heinrich Andreas, 274  
 Hepting, Olga (Rempel), 274  
 Hiebert (Huebert), Abraham, 105, 167  
 Hiebert (Huebert), Agatha, 104, 166  
 Hiebert (Huebert), Anna, 104, 167  
 Hiebert (Huebert), David, 55, 104, 159, 161, 166, 170, 172  
 Hiebert (Huebert), David, 104  
 Hiebert (Huebert), David, 104  
 Hiebert (Huebert), Dietrich, 104, 161  
 Hiebert (Huebert), Elisabeth, 104, 167  
 Hiebert (Huebert), Elisabeth (Goertz), 104, 167  
 Hiebert (Huebert), Gerhard, 104, 167  
 Hiebert (Huebert), Gerhard, 104, 167  
 Hiebert (Huebert), Heinrich, 105, 167  
 Hiebert (Huebert), Jacob, 105, 167  
 Hiebert (Huebert), Jakob, 104, 167

Hiebert (Huebert), Jakob, 104, 167  
 Hiebert (Huebert), Johann, 105, 161  
 Hiebert (Huebert), Katharina (Rempel), 104, 167  
 (Hiebert), Margaretha (Enns), 87  
 Hiebert (Huebert), Nikolai, 105, 167  
 Hiebert (Huebert), Peter, 105, 167  
 Hiebert (Huebert), Peter, 105, 167  
 Hiebert (Huebert), Susanna, 104, 167  
 Hiebert (Huebert), Sara (Baergen), 104, 167  
 Hiebert, Sarah (Peters), 117  
 Hildebrand, D (Dr), 221, 234, 244, 245  
 Hildebrand, Gerhard, 105, 161  
 Hildebrand, Mr, 105  
 Hildebrand, Mrs, 105  
 Hildebrand, N H, 234  
 Hildebrand, Natalia, 105, 151  
 Hildebrand, Sara (Regier), 421  
 Hildebrandt, Anastasia, 105, 151  
 Hildebrandt, Friedrich, 106, 151  
 Hildebrandt, Jakob, 274, 291, 311  
 Hildebrandt, Mr, 106  
 Hildebrandt, Mrs, 106  
 Hildebrandt, Mrs 274  
 Hildebrandt, Nikolai, 106, 151  
 Hooze, Children (4), 234, 242  
 Hooze, Maria, 234, 242  
 Hooze, Peter, 234, 242  
 Huebert, Agatha (Strauss), 106  
 Huebert, Children, 18  
 Huebert, Elisabeth (Rempel), 123 155, 168  
 Huebert, Jakob, 18, 33  
 Huebert, Katharina (Wiens), 147  
 Huebert, Margaretha (Wiebe), 146  
 Huebert, Miss, 234, 244  
 Huebert, Mrs, 18  
 Huebert, Nikolai (Klaas), 106  
**I**  
 Isaak, Abram, 274  
 Isaak, Abram, 275, 305, 306, 307  
 Isaak, Agathe, 276, 305, 307

Isaak, Agnes, 275, 305, 307  
 Isaak, Anna, 106  
 Isaak, Anna, 275  
 Isaak, David, 106  
 Isaak, Franz, 274  
 Isaak, Franz Jr, 106  
 Isaak, Franz Franz, 274, 300, 301  
 Isaak, Jakob, 274  
 Isaak, Jakob, 275, 304, 306, 308, 309, 313  
 Isaak, Jakob, 275, 304, 309, 332  
 Isaak, Katharina (Tina), 275, 305, 307  
 Isaak, Nalja, 274  
 Isaak, Peter, 276, 305, 307  
 Isaak, Philipp, 106  
 Isaak, Philipp Abraham, 106  
 Isaak, Wilhelm (Willy), 276, 305, 307  
 Ivanov, Anastasia (Wiens), 424  
**J**  
 Jakob "Father," 233, 244  
 Jantzen, Abr, 107, 164  
 Jantzen, Abraham, 107, 159  
 Jantzen, Abraham, 107  
 Jantzen, Elise (Claassen), 107, 169, 196-201  
 Jantzen, Johann, 107  
 Jantzen, Sarah (Friesen), 96, 107  
 Janz, Benjamin Benjamin (B B), 235  
 Janz, Isaak Sr, 107  
 Janzen, Abram, 108, 161  
 Janzen, Abram, 108  
 Janzen, Abram, 276, 300  
 Janzen, Abram, 277  
 Janzen, Aganeta(Dyck), 270, 297  
 Janzen, Aganetha, 129  
 Janzen, Aganetha (Toews), 366  
 Janzen, Anna, 108, 167, 183-192  
 Janzen, Anna, 363  
 Janzen, Anna, 418  
 Janzen, Anna (Hiebert), 105, 167  
 Janzen, Anna (Klassen), 277  
 Janzen, Anna (Martens), 109  
 Janzen, Aron, 276  
 Janzen, Children, 108  
 Janzen, Children (6), 380  
 Janzen, Cornelius, 55, 77, 108, 167, 172, 182-192  
 Janzen, Cornelius, 108, 161  
 Janzen, Cornelius, 127

Janzen, Daughters (2), 18  
 Janzen, Daughters (4), 276  
 Janzen, David David, 108  
 Janzen, Elly (Goertzen), 109  
 Janzen, Eva, 18  
 Janzen, Franz, 276  
 Janzen, Franz, 276, 298, 308, 329-337  
 Janzen, Franz, 277  
 Janzen, Franz Franz, 276  
 Janzen, Gerhard, 18, 31  
 Janzen, Gerhard, 235, 245  
 Janzen, H, 55, 108, 173, 174, 179  
 Janzen, Heinrich, 362  
 Janzen, Heinrich, 362  
 Janzen, Heinrich (Cornelius), 108, 167, 183-192  
 Janzen, Heinrich Heinrich, 235  
 Janzen, Heinrich Jakob, 109  
 Janzen, Heinrich Johann, 362, 370, 371  
 Janzen, Helena, 108, 167, 183-192  
 Janzen, Helena, 362, 418  
 Janzen, Helena (Martens), 109  
 Janzen, J D, 394, 395  
 Janzen, Jakob, 18  
 Janzen, Jakob, 235, 244, 245  
 Janzen, Jakob, 363  
 Janzen, Jakob, 410, 418  
 Janzen, Jakob Kornelius, 109  
 Janzen, Johann, 18, 31  
 Janzen, Johann, 108, 167, 183-192  
 Janzen, Johann, 109  
 Janzen, Johann, 109  
 Janzen, Johann, 362  
 Janzen, Johann, 362  
 Janzen, Johann, 380, 383  
 Janzen, Johann A, 277  
 Janzen, Johann Heinrich, 356, 357, 362, 367, 370  
 Janzen, Katharina (Pignatelli), 363  
 Janzen, Kornelius, 109, 164  
 Janzen, Lydia, 362  
 Janzen, Margaretha, 108, 167, 182-189  
 Janzen, Margaretha, 109  
 Janzen, Margaretha (Schroeder) 363  
 Janzen, Margaretha (Wiens), 148,

152, 161, 241  
 Janzen, Maria (Guenther), 100  
 Janzen, Maria (Redekopp), 287  
 Janzen, Maria (Ratzlaff), 285  
 Janzen, Martha (Ratzlaff), 285  
 Janzen, Michael Heinrich, 109, 161  
 Janzen, Mrs, 18  
 Janzen, Mrs, 110  
 Janzen, Mrs, 380  
 Janzen, Olga, 277  
 Janzen, Olga (Lepp), 362, 368, 369  
 Janzen, P, 110  
 Janzen, Peter, 108, 167, 182-192, 201  
 Janzen, Sophie (Bestvater), 109  
 Janzen, Son, 18  
 Janzen, Victor, 362  
**K**  
 Kaethler, David, 110, 161  
 Kaetler, Maria (Bahnmann), 73, 161  
 Kerber, Reinhard, 110, 159, 164  
 Ketler, Anna, 110  
 Ketler, Elisabeth, 110  
 Ketler, Eva  
 Ketler, Helena, 110  
 Ketler, Helena, 110  
 Ketler, Jakob, 110  
 Ketler, Maria, 110  
 Ketler, Katharina, 110  
 Kirkhan, Heinrich, 18  
 Kirkhan, Katharina, 18  
 Kirkhan, Rudolph, 19  
 Klassen, A, 235, 245  
 Klassen, A (Miss), 235, 244  
 Klassen, Abraham, 220, 235, 251, 254  
 Klassen, Abram, 20, 29, 31  
 Klassen, Abram Gerhard, 277  
 Klassen, Abram J, 19  
 Klassen, Abram J, 410, 418  
 Klassen, Aganetha (Reimer), 20, 29, 30  
 Klassen, Agatha, 20, 29, 30  
 Klassen, Agatha, 277  
 Klassen, Anna, 110, 152  
 Klassen, Anna, 235  
 Klassen, Anna, 236  
 Klassen, Anna, 277  
 Klassen, Anna (Willms), 21, 29,

30  
 Klassen, Anna (Guenther), 100  
 Klassen, Arthur, 277  
 Klassen, Barbara, 236  
 Klassen, Bernhard Peter, 277  
 Klassen, Children (10), 236  
 Klassen, Cornelius, 20, 29, 30  
 Klassen, Cornelius, 110, 161  
 Klassen, Cornelius Abraham, 19, 31  
 Klassen, David, 236, 243  
 Klassen, David, 278  
 Klassen, David Johann, 258, 259, 278, 300, 319-326, 328  
 Klassen, David Johann, 278, 301  
 Klassen, Dietrich, 21, 29, 30  
 Klassen, Dr, 110  
 Klassen, Elisabeth, 278  
 Klassen, Elsa, 111  
 Klassen, Erna, 21, 29, 30  
 Klassen, Erna, 279  
 Klassen, Franz, 279  
 Klassen, Gerhard, 16  
 Klassen, Gerhard, 20, 29, 30, 35  
 Klassen, Gerhard Johann, 19  
 Klassen, Heinrich, 278, 308  
 Klassen, Helena, 277  
 Klassen, Helene, 236  
 Klassen, Irene, 111  
 Klassen, Jakob, 20, 29, 30, 35  
 Klassen, Jakob, 110  
 Klassen, Jakob, 236, 243  
 Klassen, Jakob 278, 295, 299, 304, 308, 329-337  
 Klassen, Jakob J, 220, 221, 222, 235, 242, 243, 244, 251, 252, 253  
 Klassen, Johann, 20, 29  
 Klassen, Johann, 236  
 Klassen, Johann, 278  
 Klassen, Johann, 279  
 Klassen, Johann G, 21, 35  
 Klassen, Johann Gerhard, 111  
 Klassen, Johann Johann, 19, 29, 35  
 Klassen, Justina (Buhler), 77  
 Klassen, Katharina, 236  
 Klassen, Katharina, 236  
 Klassen, Katharina, 278  
 Klassen, Katharina (Spenst), 21, 29, 30  
 Klassen, Klara, 111, 151

Klassen, Klara, 236  
 Klassen, Leonhard, 236  
 Klassen, Maria, 236  
 Klassen, Maria, 278  
 Klassen, Maria (Sudermann), 134  
 Klassen, Maria (Wiens), 20, 29, 30  
 Klassen, Mr, 111  
 Klassen, Mrs, 110  
 Klassen, Mrs, 111  
 Klassen, Nikolai, 236  
 Klassen, Peter, 236, 243  
 Klassen, Peter Abraham, 279  
 Klassen, Sara, 111  
 Klassen, Susanna (Rempel), 126  
 Klassen, Vanja, 236  
 Klassen, Wilhelm, 236  
 Klassen, Wilhelm, 278  
 Klassen, Wilhelm J, 220, 221, 222, 236, 242, 244, 245, 251, 252, 253  
 Klein, Maria, 144  
 Kliewer, Dora (Martens), 380  
 Kliewer, Mr, 380  
 Klewer, Mrs, 380  
 Konrad, Justina (Fehderau), 95  
 Koop, Elisabeth (Poetker), 284, 321  
 Koop, Heinrich, 21  
 Koop, Johann (Hans), 21  
 Koop, Katharina (Dueck), 80  
 Koop, Thomas, 111, 161  
 Koop, Peter, 21  
 Koop, Peter Peter, 418  
 Kornelsen, Anna (Martens), 381  
 Krause, Anna (Nut), 279, 299  
 Krieger, Johann Johann, 363  
 Krieger, Margaretha, 363  
 Krieger, Margaretha, 363  
 Krieger, Maria, 363  
 Krieger, Martha, 363  
 Kroeker, Alexander, 237, 279  
 Kroeker, Children (4), 237  
 Kroeker, Dietrich, 237, 279  
 Kroeker, Dietrich Peter, 237, 279  
 Kroeker, Heinrich, 418  
 Kroeker, Helena, 418, 425, 428  
 Kroeker, Johann, 419, 425  
 Kroeker, Johann Johann, 279  
 Kroeker, Katharina, 237, 279  
 Kroeker, Katharina, 237, 279  
 Kroeker, Mrs, 237

Kroeker, Peter Peter, 237  
 Krueger, Bernhard, 111, 151, 279  
 Krueger, Johann, 363, 370, 371  
 Krueger, Mr, 279  
 Krueger, Mrs, 279  
 Kusmenko, Antonia (Redekopp),  
 119

## L

Landeis, Jakob Michael, 419  
 Langemann, Johann Martin, 419  
 Lecher, Anna (Hepting), 274  
 Lenzmann, Agatha (Agathe)  
 (Fast), 92, 164  
 Lenzmann, Hermann August, 111  
 Lepp, Anna (Froese), 12, 21, 22  
 Lepp, Aron Aron, 21, 32, 35  
 Lepp, Daughter, 22  
 Lepp, Helena, 22  
 Lepp, Jakob, 22, 35  
 Lepp, Katharina, 22  
 Loepp, Abram, 380  
 Loepp, Children (4), 380  
 Loepp, Mrs, 380  
 Loewen, Children (6), 280  
 Loewen, D, 112, 161  
 Loewen, Elisabeth, 280  
 Loewen, Emilia, 280  
 Loewen, Jakob, 280  
 Loewen, Johann, 280  
 Loewen, Luise, 280  
 Loewen, Margaretha, 280  
 Loewen, Maria, 22  
 Loewen, Nikolai, 280  
 Loewen, Peter Wilhelm, 419  
 Loewen, Susanna (Neufeld), 420,  
 431  
 Loewen, Widow, 280, 300  
 Loewen, Wilhelm, 280  
 Lohrenz, Gertruda (Wiens), 112,  
 167  
 Lohrenz, Heinrich, 112, 167  
 Lohrenz, Jacob, 112, 167  
 Lohrenz, Justina (Wiens), 112,  
 168  
 Lohrenz, Katharina (Quiring),  
 112, 167  
 Lohrenz, Maria (Voth), 112, 167

## M

Maier, Mr, 419  
 Maier, Mrs, 419  
 Maier, Victor, 419  
 Martens, Abraham, 363

Martens, Anna, 363  
 Martens, Anna, 380  
 Martens, Elisabeth, 281, 340  
 Martens, Helena (Isaak), 106  
 Martens, Helena (Unruh), 281,  
 304, 340-349  
 Martens, Johann Johann, 280,  
 324  
 Martens, Johann Johann, 113,  
 419  
 Martens, Katharina, 281, 340  
 Martens, Katharina (Katie)  
 (Heidebrecht), 363  
 Martens, Katharina (Rempel),  
 288  
 Martens, Katharina (Sudermann),  
 139  
 Martens, Katharina Johanna  
 Martens (Rempel), 124, 239,  
 243  
 Martens, Kornelius, 22  
 Martens, Kornelius, 281, 341  
 Martens, Kornelius Jakob, 259,  
 262, 265, 280, 292, 304, 305,  
 309, 315, 316, 317, 319-326,  
 328, 331-337, 339-349  
 Martens, Maria, 113, 151  
 Martens, Maria (Schulz), 280,  
 304, 305, 340-349  
 Martens, Mr, 113  
 Martens, Mr, 380  
 Martens, Mrs, 113  
 Martens, Mrs, 380  
 Martens, Susanna (Suse),  
 (Unruh), 280, 304, 340-349  
 Martens, Wilhelm, 281, 304,  
 341-349  
 Martens, Wilhelm J, 237  
 Martens, Wilhelm Johann, 281,  
 324  
 Martins, Anna, 419, 426, 429,  
 430  
 Mathis, Maria (Micka), 113, 164  
 Matthias, Hermann, 55, 113  
 Matthias, Katharina, 56, 113,  
 173, 175  
 Matthias, Ludwig, 113  
 Matthias, Otto, 113  
 Merk, Jakob Jakob, 237  
 Mierau, Aganetha (Fehderau), 95  
 Mierau, Helena (Jantzen), 107  
 Mierau, Jakob Jakob, 113

Mueller, Helena (Sudermann),  
 135

## N

Neudorf, Susanna (Bahnmann),  
 72  
 Neufeld, Abraham, 365  
 Neufeld, Abraham Abraham,  
 57, 67, 94, 113, 154, 160  
 Neufeld, Abraham Abraham (Sr),  
 364, 370  
 Neufeld, Abraham Abraham (Jr),  
 364  
 Neufeld, Alice (Rempel), 114  
 Neufeld, Anna, 114  
 Neufeld, Anna (365)  
 Neufeld, Anna (Dueck), 81  
 Neufeld, Areka (Goossen), 114  
 Neufeld, Arthur, 114  
 Neufeld, Daughters (4), 365  
 Neufeld, Daughters (4), 365  
 Neufeld, Elisabeth, 365  
 Neufeld, Eugene, 114  
 Neufeld, Franz, 281, 333  
 Neufeld, Gerhard Isaak, 114  
 Neufeld, Gerhard Jakob, 420,  
 426, 429, 432  
 Neufeld, Gertruda, 114  
 Neufeld, H, 380  
 Neufeld, Helena (Neufeld), 364  
 Neufeld, Hermann, 420, 426, 430  
 Neufeld, Isaak Peter, 114  
 Neufeld, Jakob, 114, 161  
 Neufeld, Jakob, 365  
 Neufeld (Mrs Jakob Penner), 365  
 Neufeld, Jakob Abraham, 365  
 Neufeld, Johann, 235, 237, 245,  
 251, 254  
 Neufeld, Johann, 238  
 Neufeld, Johann, 364  
 Neufeld, Johann, 365  
 Neufeld, Katharina, 115  
 Neufeld, Katharina (Tina), 365  
 Neufeld, Katharina (Giesbrecht),  
 364  
 Neufeld, Maria, 365  
 Neufeld, Maria (Epp), 115  
 Neufeld, Maria (Janzen), 276  
 Neufeld, Mr, 115  
 Neufeld, Mr, 115  
 Neufeld, Mrs, 113  
 Neufeld, Mrs, 115  
 Neufeld, Mrs, 115



Neufeld, Mrs, 365  
 Neufeld, Nicholas Jakob, 420,  
 426, 429, 431  
 Neufeld, Peter, 115, 161  
 Neufeld, Peter, 115, 161  
 Neufeld, Peter, 364  
 Neufeld, Peter, 365  
 Neufeld, Peter Abraham, 365,  
 370  
 Neufeld, Sons (4), 365  
 Neufeld, Sons (4), 365  
 Neufeld, Susanna, 364  
 Neufeld, Susanna, 365  
 Neufeld, Susanna, 365  
 Neufeld, Susanna (Heinrichs),  
 103, 164  
 Neufeld, Vera, 114  
 Neustaedter, Katharina (Froese),  
 11  
 Nickel, Abram, 73, 168  
 Nickel, Helena Gerhard, 22  
 Nickel, Isaac, 115  
 Nickel, Jakob, 22, 32  
 Nickel, Jakob, 259, 281, 300,  
 308, 310  
 Nickel, Jakob Johann, 281  
 Nickel, Johann, 258, 259, 281,  
 308, 310, 321, 322  
 Nickel, Maria (Ediger), 115  
 Niessen, Anna Peter (Eitzen),  
 361  
 Nikkel, Heinrich, 115

## O

## P

Paetkau, Helena (DeFehr), 267,  
 295, 299, 304, 329-337  
 Paetkau, J, 282, 301  
 Paetkau, Katharina (Froese), 17  
 Pankratz, Abram, 420  
 Pankratz, Mr, 420  
 Pankratz, Mrs, 420  
 Pauls, Agatha (Froese), 17, 27  
 Pauls, Anna Kornelius (Isaak),  
 275, 305, 306, 307  
 Pauls, Helena (Poetker), 284  
 Pauls, Heinrich J, 238  
 Pauls, Jakob, 282  
 Pauls, Johann, 282, 305  
 Pauls, Katharina, 282  
 Pauls, Kornelius, 282  
 Pauls, Kornelius Kornelius, 282  
 Pauls, Paula (Pauls), 282, 305

Penner, Abraham, 115  
 Penner, Adelbert, 238, 244, 245  
 Penner, Anna, 420  
 Penner, Anna (Buhler), 76, 166  
 Penner, Anna (Froese), 13, 27  
 Penner, Aron, 116  
 Penner, Augustine (Klassen), 116  
 Penner, Elisabeth (Lisa), 420  
 Penner, Heinrich, 282, 309, 310  
 Penner, Helena (Hamm), 100  
 Penner, Jakob, 22, 37  
 Penner, Jakob, 116, 161, 173  
 Penner, Widower Johann, 282,  
 295, 329-337  
 Penner, Johann, 282, 301  
 Penner, Johann, 283, 300  
 Penner, Justina (Kate) (Klein),  
 116  
 Penner, Katharina (Fast), 272,  
 301  
 Penner, Maria, 116  
 Penner, Maria (Froese), 15  
 Penner, Peter, 116  
 Penner, Sara (Hiebert), 104, 166  
 (Penner) Widow (Enns), 87  
 Peters, Bernhard J, 117  
 Peters, Anna, 22  
 Peters, Anna, 284  
 Peters, Anna (Rahn), 421  
 Peters, David, 284  
 Peters, Elsa, 284  
 Peters, Franz, 283  
 Peters, Heinrich, 283  
 Peters, Helena, 22  
 Peters, Helena (DeFehr), 267,  
 295, 304, 329-337  
 Peters, Hermann, 421  
 Peters, Hermann Heinrich, 117  
 Peters, Johann Franz, 283  
 Peters, Katharina (Quiring), 380  
 Peters, Katharina (Rempel), 117  
 Peters, Margaretha, 283  
 Peters, Margaretha (Quiring), 118  
 Peters, Margaretha (Rempel), 117  
 Peters, Maria Jakob, 284  
 Peters, Mr, 117  
 Peters, Mrs, 117  
 Peters, Nikolai, 284  
 Peters, Peter, 22, 32, 46  
 Peters, Peter, 117  
 Peters, Peter, 284  
 Peters, Wilhelm, 117

Peters, Wilhelm, 421  
 Poetker, Amalia Katharina  
 (Baerg), 284  
 Poetker, Emilie (Dyck), 271, 284,  
 303, 304, 321-326, 328  
 Poetker, Gerhard, 284, 311, 321,  
 322, 323  
 Poetker, Heinrich Paul, 284  
 Poetker, Helena Hildegard (Janz),  
 284  
 Poetker, Paul Edward, 284  
 Poetker, Paul Gerhard, 284, 311,  
 322  
 Prieb, Children (2), 285  
 Prieb, Heinrich, 285, 300  
 Prieb, Mrs, 285

## Q

Quiring, Abraham, 118, 168  
 Quiring, Adelgrunde (Voigt),  
 118, 168  
 Quiring, Elisabeth (Penner), 119,  
 168  
 Quiring, Jakob, 380  
 Quiring, Johann, 117, 168  
 Quiring, Johann, 118  
 Quiring, Johann, 118, 168  
 Quiring, Johann, 380  
 Quiring, Johann Jakob, 375,  
 380, 382  
 Quiring, Katharina (Epp), 380  
 Quiring, Margaretha, 118, 168  
 Quiring, Margaretha, 119, 168  
 Quiring, Maria, 380  
 Quiring, Maria (Nickel), 115  
 Quiring, Maria (Sudermann),  
 118, 135, 168  
 Quiring, Peter, 118, 161  
 Quiring, Peter, 118  
 Quiring, Peter, 118  
 Quiring, Peter, 380  
 Quiring, Rosalie (Rosa), 118, 168  
 Quiring, Sarah, 380  
 Quiring, Susanna, 380  
 Quiring, Wilhelm, 118, 168  
 Quiring, Wilhelm, 118, 134, 168,  
 199

## R

Rahn, Hermann, 421  
 Ratzlaff, Bernhard, 285, 296, 299  
 Ratzlaff, Bernhard, 286  
 Ratzlaff, Erich, 285  
 Ratzlaff, Erich, 286



Ratzlaff, Gustav, 285, 299  
 Ratzlaff, Gustav, 286  
 Ratzlaff, Helena, 285  
 Ratzlaff, Hulda (Ratzlaff), 286  
 Ratzlaff, Leonhard Peter, 286  
 Ratzlaff, Peter, 285  
 Ratzlaff, Richard, 286  
 Ratzlaff, Wilhelmine (Schmidt), 285  
 Ratzlaff, Wilhelmine (Schroeder), 286  
 Redekopp, Jakob Franz, 22  
 Redekopp, Alexander, 119  
 Redekopp, Benjamin, 119  
 Redekopp, Benjamin, 287, 287  
 Redekopp, Benjamin Benjamin, 119  
 Redekopp, Eduard, 287  
 Redekopp, Erna (Dick), 119  
 Redekopp, Karl K, 287  
 Redekopp, Laura (Unger), 119  
 Redekopp, Margaretha, 287  
 Redekopp, Maria (Janzen), 277  
 Redekopp, Peter B, 119  
 Redekopp, Peter Karl, 287  
 Redekopp, Selma, 287  
 Regehr, Helena (Bartel), 74  
 Regier, Abraham, 421  
 Regier, Abraham, 421  
 Reimer, Anna, 365  
 Reimer, Anna (Claassen), 77  
 Reimer, Elisabeth (Enns), 88  
 Reimer, Franz, 366  
 Reimer, Gerhard, 23  
 Reimer, Johann, 366  
 Reimer, Johann David, 121  
 Reimer, Johann L, 287  
 Reimer, Maria (Wall), 144  
 Reimer, Mr, 287  
 Reimer, Mrs, 287  
 Reimer, Peter, 421, 425, 427  
 Rempel, Abram, 287, 300, 323  
 Rempel, Abram, 381, 383  
 Rempel, Abram Dietrich, 287, 300  
 Rempel, Aganetha, 125  
 Rempel, Agatha, 122, 168  
 Rempel, Agatha, 421, 426, 429  
 Rempel, Amalia, 125  
 Rempel, Anna, 287  
 Rempel, Anna (Boldt), 231  
 Rempel, Anna (Schultz), 126

Rempel, Anna (Siemens), 122, 168  
 Rempel, Anna (Willms), 126, 155  
 Rempel, Anna (Willms), 149  
 Rempel, Augusta, 126  
 Rempel, Augusta, 126  
 Rempel, Child, 239  
 Rempel, Children (3), 288  
 Rempel, Cornelius, 127  
 Rempel, Cornelius, 288  
 Rempel, Elisabeth, 123  
 Rempel, Elisabeth, 288  
 Rempel, Elisabeth (Funk), 123, 168  
 Rempel, Elisabeth (Sawadsky), 289, 300  
 Rempel, Elisabeth (Siemens), 122, 168  
 Rempel, Erna, 125  
 Rempel, Georg Nikolai, 238, 239, 243  
 Rempel, Gerhard, 125  
 Rempel, Gustav Johann , 121  
 Rempel, Heinrich, 122, 168  
 Rempel, Heinrich, 125  
 Rempel, Heinrich, 127  
 Rempel, Heinrich, 288  
 Rempel, Heinrich H, 375, 381, 382, 384  
 Rempel, Heinrich Nikolai, 238, 239, 243  
 Rempel, Helena, 122  
 Rempel, Helena, 122  
 Rempel, Helena, 122, 168  
 Rempel, Helena (Reimer), 288  
 Rempel, Helena (Bergen), 75, 166  
 Rempel, Hilda, 125  
 Rempel, Isbrand, 123  
 Rempel, Isbrand, 126, 155  
 Rempel, Isbrand Peter, 121, 156  
 Rempel, Jacob, 122, 161  
 Rempel, Jakob, 123, 168  
 Rempel, Jakob, 126, 155  
 Rempel, Jakob, 126  
 Rempel, Jakob, 127  
 Rempel, Johann, 54, 122, 172  
 Rempel, Johann, 122, 168, 170  
 Rempel, Johann, 122, 168  
 Rempel, Johann, 123  
 Rempel, Johann, 123, 168

Rempel, Johann, 125  
 Rempel, Johann, 127  
 Rempel, Johann, 239  
 Rempel, Johann, 287  
 Rempel, Johann (Ivan), 288  
 Rempel, Johann Gerhard, 287, 309, 315, 331  
 Rempel, Johann Heinrich, 239  
 Rempel, Johann Johann, 122  
 Rempel, Johann Peter, 123, 125, 155, 168, 170  
 Rempel, Justina (Andres) (Friesen), 124  
 Rempel, Katharina, 122, 168  
 Rempel, Katharina, 123  
 Rempel, Katharina, 126  
 Rempel, Katharina, 287  
 Rempel, Katharina, 288  
 Rempel, Katharina (Epp), 288  
 Rempel, Katharina (Smith), 127  
 Rempel, Katharina Gerhard (Bergen), 378  
 Rempel, Kornelius Gerhard, 288  
 Rempel, Lydia, 287  
 Rempel, Margaretha, 123  
 Rempel, Margaretha (Hamm), 127  
 Rempel, Maria, 122  
 Rempel, Maria, 287  
 Rempel, Maria, 421, 426, 429  
 Rempel, Maria (Friesen), 126  
 Rempel, Maria (Funk), 123, 168  
 Rempel, Maria (Goossen), 122, 168  
 Rempel, Maria (Janzen), 127  
 Rempel, Maria (Sudermann), 135  
 Rempel, Maria Johann (Toews), 142, 169  
 Rempel, Mathilde (Friesen), 127  
 Rempel, Mr, 124  
 Rempel, Mr, 366  
 Rempel, Mr, 375, 381, 382  
 Rempel, Mrs, 122  
 Rempel, Mrs, 124  
 Rempel, Mrs, 239  
 Rempel, Nikolai, 123  
 Rempel, Nikolai, 239, 243  
 Rempel, Nikolai Isbrand, 124, 126, 155, 156, 239, 243  
 Rempel, Nikolai Nikolai, 239  
 Rempel, Olga, 239, 243

- Rempel, Olga (Janzen), 127  
 Rempel, Peter, 123  
 Rempel, Peter, 123, 168  
 Rempel, Peter, 125, 161  
 Rempel, Peter, 125  
 Rempel, Peter, 125, 155  
 Rempel, Peter, 288  
 Rempel, Peter, 288  
 Rempel, Widow Peter, 288, 300  
 Rempel, Peter G, 125  
 Rempel, Peter Peter, 54, 125, 155, 156, 172  
 Rempel, Susanna, 287  
 Rempel, Susanna, 287  
 Rempel, Susanna, 288  
 Rempel, Susanna, 288  
 Rempel, Susanna (Albrecht), 7  
 Rempel, Susanna (Grove), 127  
 Rempel, Vera, 239, 243  
 Rempel, Wilhelm, 126  
 Rempel, Wilhelm, 126  
 Rempel, Wilhelm, 126  
 Rempel, Wilhelm Jakob, 126  
 Riediger, Abram, 127  
 Riediger, Abram, 128  
 Riediger, Aganetha (Sudermann), 129, 141  
 Riediger, Agatha (Klassen), 128  
 Riediger, Agatha (Sudermann), 141  
 Riediger, Anna, 128  
 Riediger, Anna (Thiessen), 127  
 Riediger, Cornelius, 128  
 Riediger, Cornelius, 289  
 Riediger, Elisabeth (Janzen), 127  
 Riediger, Elisabeth (Klassen), 111  
 Riediger, Elisabeth (Thiessen), 128  
 Riediger, Eva, 128  
 Riediger, Heinrich, 127  
 Riediger, Heinrich, 128  
 Riediger, Heinrich, 129  
 Riediger, Helena, 128  
 Riediger, Helena, 289  
 Riediger, Helena (Ewert)  
 Riediger, Jakob, 289  
 Riediger, Jakob, 289  
 Riediger, Jakob Peter, 262, 289, 304, 311, 319-326, 328  
 Riediger, Johann, 128  
 Riediger, Julius, 129  
 Riediger, Justina, 128  
 Riediger, Justina (Rempel), 287  
 Riediger, Katharina, 128  
 Riediger, Katharina, 289  
 Riediger, Katharina (Reimer), 129  
 Riediger, Maria, 128  
 Riediger, Martin A, 127  
 Riediger, Peter, 128  
 Riediger, Peter, 129  
 Riediger, Peter, 289, 311, 322  
 Riediger, Peter Martin, 55, 109, 128, 147, 153, 159, 174  
 Riediger, Susanna, 129  
 Riediger, Susanna (Guertler), 129  
 Riediger, Wilhelm, 128  
 Riediger, Wilhelm, 289  
 Riesen, Helena (Goerz), 99  
 Riesen, von, Agatha (Nickel), 132, 169  
 Riesen, von, Agnes, 132, 169  
 Riesen, von, Anna, 129, 167, 182-192  
 Riesen, von, Anna, 130, 186  
 Riesen, von, Anna (Wiens), 131  
 Riesen, von, Friedrich, 132, 169  
 Riesen, von, Gertrude (Bergmann), 132, 169  
 Riesen, von, Heinrich, 130, 134, 184  
 Riesen, von, Heinrich, 130, 186  
 Riesen, von, Heinrich, 132, 169  
 Riesen, von, Helena, 131  
 Riesen, von, Helena (Janzen), 108, 167, 182-192  
 Riesen, von, Isbrand, 130  
 Riesen, von, Johann, 132, 169  
 Riesen, von, Johanna, 130  
 Riesen, von, Johann Friedrich, 130  
 Riesen, von, Johannes, 131, 184  
 Riesen, von, Johannes, 131  
 Riesen, von, Katharina (Moultet), 132, 169  
 Riesen, von, Katharina Henrietta, 130  
 Riesen, von, Marie Emilie, 130  
 Riesen, von, Rudolf, 131, 169  
 Riesen, von, Rudolf Hermann, 130, 131, 169, 173  
 Ruff, Alida (Sudermann), 422  
 S  
 Sawadsky, Anna (Nutya), 290  
 Sawadsky, Children (6), 290  
 Sawadsky, Heinrich, 289, 301  
 Sawadsky, Heinrich (Heinz), 290  
 Sawadsky, Johann (Hans), 290  
 Sawadsky, Louise (Sargenko), 289  
 Sawadsky, Maria (Schellenberg), 289  
 Sawatzky, A, 290, 300, 303  
 Sawatzky, Heinrich, 290  
 Sawatzky, Johann, 290  
 Sawatzky, Maria, 290  
 Schaefer, Mr, 421, 426, 429  
 Schapansky, Helena (Penner) (Goertzen), 274  
 Scharkov, Sergey, 422, 426, 429  
 Schellenberg, Anna, 23  
 Schellenberg, David David, 366  
 Schellenberg, Johann, 23  
 Schellenberg, Johann, 23, 32, 46  
 Schellenberg, Mrs, 366  
 Schmidt, Abram, 132  
 Schmidt, Children, 23  
 Schmidt, Emil, 422  
 Schmidt, Katharina (Gorsching), 99  
 Schmidt, Klaas B, 23  
 Schmidt, Mrs, 23  
 Schmidt, Mrs, 132, 161  
 Schroeder, Alexander, 148  
 Schroeder, Anna, 148  
 Schroeder, Anna (Dick), 291  
 Schroeder, Children (3), 240  
 Schroeder, Cornelius, 291  
 Schroeder, David, 132, 161  
 Schroeder, David, 148  
 Schroeder, David, 148  
 Schroeder, Elisabeth (Liese) (Baerg), 290  
 Schroeder, Gerhard, 291  
 Schroeder, Heinrich, 148  
 Schroeder, Heinrich, 291  
 Schroeder, Heinrich Peter, 240  
 Schroeder, Katharina (Janzen), 132, 362, 367  
 Schroeder, Margaretha, 132  
 Schroeder, Margaretha, 148  
 Schroeder, Margaretha (Grete), 133  
 Schroeder, Maria, 148  
 Schroeder, Maria (Klassen), 236

Schroeder, Maria (Wall), 290  
 Schroeder, Mrs, 240  
 Schroeder, Nikolai, 133, 163  
 Schroeder, Nikolai, 148  
 Schroeder, Peter, 148  
 Schroeder, Peter, 290  
 Schroeder, Peter Peter, 259, 262, 290, 298, 311  
 Schroeder, Peter David, 133, 164  
 Schroeder, Wilhelm, 148  
 Schulz, Jakob, 280, 304, 305, 340-349  
 Schulz, Jakob, 366  
 Schulz, Jakob Jakob, 366  
 Schulz, Katharina, 366  
 Siemens, Gerhard, 23, 32, 46  
 Siemens, J, 258, 259, 291, 308, 310, 321, 322  
 Siemens, Johann Jakob, 23  
 Sommerfeld, Maria (Enns), 88, 166  
 Spenst, H, 133, 161  
 Steingart, Sarah (DeFehr), 78  
 Steltz, J, 291, 301  
 Strauss, Johann (Hans), 422, 426, 429  
 Sudermann, Abraham, 134  
 Sudermann, Abraham, 135  
 Sudermann, Abraham, 136, 169  
 Sudermann, Abraham Jakob 139, 173  
 Sudermann, Abraham Isaak, 54, 55, 133, 158, 173, 194, 196  
 Sudermann, Abraham Jakob, 55, 57, 134, 159, 164, 173  
 Sudermann, Abram, 136  
 Sudermann, Abram, 140  
 Sudermann, Anna, 133  
 Sudermann, Anna, 138  
 Sudermann, Anna (Claassen), 136  
 Sudermann, Anna (Janzen), 136, 169  
 Sudermann, Anna (Rempel), 126  
 Sudermann, Anna Johann (Hausknecht), 102  
 Sudermann, Aron, 291  
 Sudermann, Widow Bernhard, 240  
 Sudermann, Elisabeth (Jantzen), 135  
 Sudermann, Elisabeth

(Sudermann), 135  
 Sudermann, Emmy, 138, 164  
 Sudermann, Erna, 422  
 Sudermann, Eva (Friesen), 140  
 Sudermann, Gerhard, 141  
 Sudermann, Heinrich, 134  
 Sudermann, Heinrich, 136  
 Sudermann, Heinrich Jakob, 134  
 Sudermann, Helena, 140  
 Sudermann, Helena Johann (Penner), 116  
 Sudermann, Helene (Voth), 143  
 Sudermann, Hermann, 135, 157, 158  
 Sudermann, Hermann, 135  
 Sudermann, Hermann Abraham, 135  
 Sudermann, Hermann E, 136, 169  
 Sudermann, Hermann Woelke, 136, 161, 169  
 Sudermann, Isaak, 137, 161  
 Sudermann, J, 240, 244  
 Sudermann, Jakob, 134  
 Sudermann, Jakob, 136  
 Sudermann, Jakob, 137, 161  
 Sudermann, Jakob, 137, 153  
 Sudermann, Jakob, 138, 172  
 Sudermann, Jakob, 139  
 Sudermann, Jakob, 140  
 Sudermann, Jakob Isaak, 54, 137, 172, 173  
 Sudermann, Jakob Johann, 240  
 Sudermann, Johann, 138  
 Sudermann, Johann, 140  
 Sudermann, Johann Abraham, 139  
 Sudermann, Johanna, 138  
 Sudermann, Katharina (Bahnmann), 72, 165  
 Sudermann, Leonhard, 141  
 Sudermann, Leonhard Abraham, 55, 140, 157, 158, 159, 165, 169, 170, 186, 187, 188, 191, 193-202  
 Sudermann, Leonhard Jakob, 57, 137, 140, 159, 160, 162, 164  
 Sudermann, Leonhard Leonhard, 141  
 Sudermann, Luise (Simmersbach), 138

Sudermann, Margaretha, 140  
 Sudermann, Maria, 135  
 Sudermann, Maria, 136  
 Sudermann, Maria (Tcheretz), 138, 164  
 Sudermann, Maria (Bartel), 136, 169  
 Sudermann, Maria (Esau), 91  
 Sudermann, Maria (Klassen), 236  
 Sudermann, Maria (Sudermann), 133, 169, 194-202  
 Sudermann, Marie (Klassen), 236, 243  
 Sudermann, Martha, 135  
 Sudermann, Mrs, 134  
 Sudermann, N, 141, 164  
 Sudermann, Theodor, 422  
 Sudermann, theodor, 422  
 Sudermann, Peter, 136  
 Sudermann, Peter, 138, 160, 172  
 Sudermann, Peter, 138  
 Sudermann, Peter, 58, 141, 240  
 Sudermann, Salomon (Sam), 137, 169  
 Sudermann, Sara (Riesen, von) (Quiring), 118, 130, 134, 168  
 Sudermann, Sara (Warkentin), 136, 169  
 Sukkau, Alexander, 57, 142  
**T**  
 Teichrieb, Franz, 410, 422, 435, 436  
 Teske, Miss M, 240, 244  
 Thessmann, Mrs (Dueckmann), 415, 425  
 Thiessen, Adina, 23  
 Thiessen, Aganetha, 23  
 Thiessen, Agatha (Entz), 89, 166  
 Thiessen, Anna, 292  
 Thiessen, Anna (Dueck), 8  
 Thiessen, Anna (Janzen) (Thiessen), 422  
 Thiessen, David, 142  
 Thiessen, David, 292  
 Thiessen, David, 292  
 Thiessen, David Abram, 292  
 Thiessen, Elisabeth, 23  
 Thiessen, Elisabeth, 142  
 Thiessen, Erna Peter, 292  
 Thiessen, Gerhard, 23  
 Thiessen, H, 292, 310  
 Thiessen, Hanna, 23

Thiessen, Heinrich, 240  
 Thiessen, Helena, 23  
 Thiessen, Helena, 292  
 Thiessen, Helene (Janzen), 362, 371  
 Thiessen, Irma, 292  
 Thiessen, Malvina, 23  
 Thiessen, Maria (Rempel), 122, 168  
 Thiessen, Mr, 23  
 Thiessen, Peter, 23  
 Thiessen, Peter Johann , 422  
 Thiessen, Wilhelmina, 292  
 Thomsen, Children (4), 241  
 Thomsen, Heinrich Gerhard, 241  
 Thomsen, Mrs, 241  
 Tjahrt, Paul Peter, 142, 164  
 Toews, Abram, 142  
 Toews, Aron Johann, 423, 429  
 Toews, Franz, 142, 169  
 Toews, Heinrich, 142, 169  
 Toews, Helena, 142  
 Toews, Isbrand, 142, 169  
 Toews, Johann, 142, 169  
 Toews, Johann Heinrich, 142, 169  
 Toews, Katharina (Unruh), 24, 44  
 Toews, Margaretha (Peters), 117  
 Toews, Maria, 143, 169  
 Toews, Peter, 142, 169  
 Tcheretz, Alexander, 138  
 Tcheretz, Anna, 138  
 Tcheretz, Georg, 138  
 Tcheretz, Lydia, 138  
 Tcheretz, Sergei, 138  
 Tcheretz, Valerian, 138  
 Tcheretz, Victor, 138  
**U**  
 Unger, Abram, 292, 300  
 Unger, Children (2), 292  
 Unger, Mr, 23  
 Unger, Mr, 375, 381, 382  
 Unger, Mrs, 23  
 Unger, Mrs, 292  
 Unger, Son, 23  
 Unrau, Children (6), 292, 423  
 Unrau, Heinrich Heinrich, 292, 309, 423  
 Unrau, Helena (Neufeld), 364  
 Unruh, Abraham, 24, 45  
 Unruh, Abraham Heinrich, 1, 9, 13, 24, 14, 16, 18, 22, 23,

31-34, 43-51, 323, 423, 429  
 Unruh, Anna (Kornelsen) (Bachman), 381  
 Unruh, Benjamin Heinrich, 43, 45, 423  
 Unruh, David Heinrich, 24, 37, 38  
 Unruh, Elisabeth, 24, 45  
 Unruh, Eva (Sudermann), 137  
 Unruh, Heinrich, 24, 45  
 Unruh, Helena (Lena), 25  
 Unruh, Johann, 24, 45  
 Unruh, Katharina, 24, 45  
 Unruh, Kornelius, 24, 45  
 Unruh, Kornelius Heinrich, 25, 43  
 Unruh, Martha, 25  
 Unruh, Mr, 381  
 Unruh, Mrs, 381  
 Unruh, Victor, 24, 45  
**V**  
 Vetter, Elisabeth Ludwig (Wagner), 143  
 Vogt, Abram, 394  
 Voth, Benjamin, 292, 301  
 Voth, Children (3), 241  
 Voth, David, 143  
 Voth, Elisabeth (Dyck), 271  
 Voth, Gerhard, 143, 161  
 Voth, Gerhard, 143  
 Voth, Heinrich, 143, 161  
 Voth, Hermann, 148  
 Voth, Mrs, 241  
 Voth, Mrs, 292  
 Voth, Peter Andreas, 241  
 Voth, Tobias, 143  
**W**  
 Wagner, Albrecht Martin, 143  
 Wagner, Alma, 143  
 Wall, A J, 144  
 Wall, Anna, 145, 151  
 Wall, Anna, 145, 151  
 Wall, Elisabeth (Unruh), 24, 43-47  
 Wall, Elvira (Elfie), 145  
 Wall, Fedor, 145, 151  
 Wall, Gerhard, 144  
 Wall, Heinrich Heinrich, 381  
 Wall, Helena, 381  
 Wall, Jakob Peter, 143, 173  
 Wall, Johann, 145, 151  
 Wall, Johann Jakob, 241

Wall, Johann Peter, 144, 154, 173, 175  
 Wall, Maria, 145, 151  
 Wall, Mr, 144  
 Wall, Mr, 145  
 Wall, Mr, 145  
 Wall, Mr, 145  
 Wall, Mr, 145  
 Wall, Mr, 145  
 Wall, Mr, 145  
 Wall, Mrs, 145  
 Wall, Mrs, 145  
 Wall, Mrs, 145  
 Wall, Mrs, 145  
 Wall, Mrs, 145  
 Wall, Olga, 381  
 Wall, Paulina, 381  
 Wall, Rena, 144  
 Wallmann, Elisabeth, 145, 151  
 Wallmann, Maria, 241  
 Wallmann, Mr, 145  
 Wallmann, Mr, 241  
 Wallmann, Mrs, 145  
 Wallmann, Mrs, 241  
 Wallmann, Peter, 241, 245  
 Warkentin, Agatha, 292  
 Warkentin, Dietrich Johann, 25  
 Warkentin, Elisabeth, 25  
 Warkentin, Elisabeth, 292  
 Warkentin, Elisabeth, 292  
 Warkentin, Gerhard, 145, 154  
 Warkentin, Heinrich Abram, 292  
 Warkentin, Helena (Dyck), 270  
 Warkentin, Helena Nikolai, 292  
 Warkentin, Jakob, 220, 241, 251  
 Warkentin, Jakob (Jr), 241, 245  
 Warkentin, J J, 241  
 Warkentin, Katharina, 25  
 Warkentin, Margaretha, 25  
 Warkentin, Maria, 25  
 Warkentin, Maria, 145, 154  
 Warkentin, Peter P, 292  
 Wedel, Amalia, 146, 151  
 Wedel, Benjamin, 54, 145, 174  
 Wedel, Carolina, 145  
 Wedel, Mr, 146  
 Wedel, Mrs, 146  
 Weier, Dietrich, 25  
 Weier, Jakob, 25  
 Weier, Johann, 25  
 Wiebe, Abraham, 146, 158  
 Wiebe, Abraham, 146  
 Wiebe, Abraham, 146

Wiebe, Abram, 146  
 Wiebe, Abram, 146  
 Wiebe, Aganetha (Miller), 293  
 Wiebe, Child (1), 292  
 Wiebe, Children (3), 292  
 Wiebe, Widow David, 292, 301  
 Wiebe, Elisabeth (Heide), 293  
 Wiebe, Elisabeth (Regehr), 146  
 Wiebe, Heinrich, 382, 383  
 Wiebe, Helena (Janzen), 109  
 Wiebe, Helena Peter, 292  
 Wiebe, Jakob, 146, 174  
 Wiebe, Johann, 293, 298, 308  
 Wiebe, Widow Johann, 292, 300, 301  
 Wiebe, Katharina (Lohrenz), 112, 167  
 Wiebe, Margaretha (Pauls) (Fast), 146  
 Wiebe, Margaretha (Enns), 87  
 Wiebe, Marie (Riesen, von), 131  
 Wiebe, Mrs., 146  
 Wiebe, Mrs., 147  
 Wiebe, Nikolai, 146  
 Wiebe, Peter, 57, 147, 157  
 Wiebe, Peter, 147  
 Wiebe, Peter Jakob, 147  
 Wiebe, Wilhelm (Bill), 293  
 Wieler, Bernhard, 147, 161  
 Wiens, Abram, 293  
 Wiens, Aganetha (Natascha) (Koop), 148  
 Wiens, Anna, 424, 425, 428  
 Wiens, Anna (Ediger), 272  
 Wiens, Anna (Schroeder), 148, 152, 241  
 Wiens, Aron, 356, 366, 370  
 Wiens, Bernhard, 147  
 Wiens, Cornelius, 293  
 Wiens, D., 55, 108, 147, 174, 179  
 Wiens, Elisabeth (Rempel), 126, 155, 156  
 Wiens, Franz, 293  
 Wiens, Gerhard, 293  
 Wiens, Heinrich, 424  
 Wiens, Helena, 147  
 Wiens, Ivan, 293  
 Wiens, Jakob Gerhard, 293  
 Wiens, Johann, 147, 161  
 Wiens, Julius, 54, 147, 174  
 Wiens, Katharina Nikolai (Bahnmann) (Dyck) (Regier), 119, 152, 161, 241  
 Wiens, Margaretha (Voth), 148, 152  
 Wiens, Maria, 293  
 Wiens, Maria (Guenther), 100, 148, 152  
 Wiens, Maria (Rempel), 125  
 Wiens, Martha (Janzen), 277  
 Wiens, Mr., 147  
 Wiens, Mrs., 147  
 Wiens, Nilolai Johann, 54, 148, 152, 161, 172, 174, 241  
 Wiens, Olga, 293  
 Wiens, Peter, 149  
 Wiens, Peter, 366  
 Wiens, Riva Maria, 424  
 Wiens, Sara, 366  
 Wiens, Susanna, 293  
 Wiens, Susanna (Rempel), 121, 156  
 Wiens, Wilhelm, 293  
 Willems, Anna (Fehderau), 94  
 Willems, Katharina, 149, 151  
 Willems, Mr., 149  
 Willems, Mrs., 149  
 Willms, Anna Peter, 149  
 Willms, David, 241, 245  
 Willms, Elisabeth (Fehderau), 95  
 Willms, Franz, 126, 155, 161  
 Willms, Franz M., 149  
 Willms, H., 149  
 Willms, Jakob, 149, 161  
 Willms, Johann, 25, 32  
 Willms, Maria (Davidenko), 424  
 Willms, Maria (Dueck), 82  
 Willms, Mrs., 149, 161  
 Willms, Peter, 149, 161  
 Willms, Peter Peter, 149  
 Willms, Wife (Janzen), 108  
 Winter, Abram, 293  
 Winter, Mr., 293  
 Winter, Mrs., 293  
 Winter, Sons (4), 293  
 Woelk, Aganetha, 382  
 Woelk, Katharina, 382  
 Woelke, Elisabeth (Sudermann), 133, 194  
**X**  
 X, Mr., 149  
**Y**  
 Y, Mr., 150, 171  
 Y, Mrs., 150, 171

## WEIGHTS AND MEASURES

### LINEAR MEASUREMENTS

1 vershok	1/16 arshin	1.7 inches	4.4 cm
1 arshin	16 vershok	28.0 inches	71.12 cm
1 sazhen (faden or fathom)	3 arshin	7.0 feet	213.36 cm
1 verst	500 sazhen (fathoms)	.663 miles (3,500 feet)	1.0668 km

### LAND AREA

1 dessiatine	2,400 square sazhen or fathoms	2.7 acres	1.0925 hectares
1 morgen (Prussian)	.234 dessiatines	.631 acres	.255 hectares

### WEIGHTS

1 zolotnik	1/96 funt	.33 oz	4.26 grams
1 funt (Russian pound)	96 zolotnik	12.0 oz	409.5 grams
1 pud (pood)	40 funts	36.11 lbs	16.38 kgs

### DRY MEASURES (mostly grains)

1 chetverik	1/8 chetvert	.75 bushels (U.S.) .73 bushels (Imperial)	26.24 litres
1 chetvert	8 chetverik 8 puds	5.96 bushels (U.S.) 5.77 bushels (Imperial)	209.92 litres
1 fuder	1 ladder wagon full		

### MONETARY

1 ruble The silver ruble was often worth considerably more than the paper ruble	100 kopeks	value in Canadian and U.S. currency has varied from time to time	
--	------------	---	--

Specific values of weights and measures used in Russia have varied from time to time. Some were eventually standardized by imperial decree, and thereafter remained unchanged. The values quoted in this table are those which were, according to our best information, in common use in Russia during the time the Mennonites lived there. In 1918 all weights and measurements in the Soviet Union were changed to the metric system.

Table taken from *Hierschau: An Example of Russian Mennonite Life*

## **CZARS (TSARS) OF RUSSIA**

### **DURING THE MENNONITE PERIOD**

Catherine II (The Great)	1762-1796	Conquered the Crimea and opened southern Russia for settlement. First invited the Mennonites to Russia
Paul I	1796-1801	Confirmed Mennonite privileges
Alexander I	1801-1825	Allied with, then fought against Napoleon
Nicholas I	1825-1855	Autocratic, police state, but some economic reforms
Alexander II	1855-1881	Introduced many reforms. Start of Russification of minorities, including Mennonites. Assassinated
Alexander III	1881-1894	More authoritarian, although industry did well
Nicholas II	1894-1917	Politically weak and unreliable. Shot with most of family in 1918

### **RUSSO-TURKISH WARS**

In general these wars could be characterized by a gradual weakening and territorial loss by the Turkish Empire. Russia's ambitions were to gain more territory in southern Ukraine and around the Black Sea, to become the dominant power in the Balkans, to gain access first to the Black Sea, then to the Mediterranean Sea. Peter the Great (1682-1725) forced the Turks out of most of what now is Ukraine.

1736-1739	In wars during the eighteenth century Russia and Austria were allies against the Turks. Catherine the Great conquered areas north of the Black Sea and the Crimea and opened southern Russia for settlement
1768-1774	
1787-1792	
1806-1812	Russia gained Bessarabia
1828-1829	Russia gained control of the eastern coast of the Black Sea
1853-1856	Crimean War. Britain and France allied with the Turks. Russia lost dominant position in Balkans and Black Sea.
1877-1878	Russia regained some of the losses of the Crimean War
1914-1917	World War I. Russia had hoped to gain Constantinople and the Dardanelles, but did not succeed.



## DATES AND CALENDARS

No attempt has been made in this index to differentiate or correct dates as to the Julian (Old Style) or Gregorian (New Style) calendars.

The Julian Calendar was in common use in Europe after it was authorized by Julius Caesar in 46 B.C., but increasing discrepancy with the seasons was noted. Pope Gregory XIII announced that the day after October 4, 1582 was to become October 15, thereby correcting the calendar by ten days. To prevent any further deviation it was also decreed that adjustments would be made to the leap years. Centennial years would be ordinary years unless they were divisible by 400; 1600 was therefore a leap year, but 1700, 1800 and 1900 were not. 2000 was a leap year. This corrects as closely as possible for the accepted actual length of the year, being 365.2422 days.

Most western Catholic countries accepted the Gregorian Calendar soon after it was announced, although Protestant states such as Denmark, the Netherlands and northern Germany waited until 1700; Britain came on stream in 1752. Because the Gregorian Calendar had been promulgated by a Roman Catholic pope it was not accepted by the Russian Orthodox Church and therefore not by Russia.

In the calculation of any historical dates, therefore, one has to know both the date and the country in which the event transpired. Initially the discrepancy was ten days; this changed to 11 on March 1, 1700, then 12 on March 1, 1800 and to 13 days after March 1, 1900. There has been no additional discrepancy calculated this century because 2000 was a leap year.

The Julian Calendar was in use in Russia until February, 1918, when the revolutionary government decreed a switch. February 1 became February 14, thereby catching up the 13 days. The Russian Orthodox Church, however, still maintained the Julian Calendar, and to this day (2006) some churches use it.

The early Anabaptists obviously used the Julian Calendar, then increasingly after 1582 were in areas of Europe where the Gregorian Calendar was in vogue. Mennonites in Prussia used the Gregorian (New Style), but then had to switch to the Julian (Old Style) when they moved to Russia. Because of this peculiarity of dates, some Mennonites celebrated Easter in Prussia, then celebrated it again some days later in Russia.

After February, 1918, all official documentation in the Soviet Union was according to the Gregorian Calendar. Some Mennonites accepted this wholeheartedly and even corrected family records to reflect this change. Others, for various reasons, did not. Some maintained old dates, such as birthdays, simply for sentimental reasons. For this index where primary sources have been used from the czarist times in Russia, presumably dates will be Julian; where primary sources are from after February, 1918, they may be Gregorian.

## AUTHOR AND CARTOGRAPHER

Helmut Theodore Huebert is a practicing orthopaedic surgeon in Winnipeg, Canada, now semi-retired. He was born in Bassano, Alberta, but then as a boy moved from place to place during the time his father intermittently taught Bible school and received further education. In 1948 the family settled in Winnipeg, where Huebert obtained his high school education at the Mennonite Brethren Collegiate Institute. He then went on to the University of Manitoba, where he also received most of his post-graduate education.

While pursuing his chosen profession, Huebert also has a deep commitment to Jesus Christ. This has been expressed by his participation in the local congregation, the Portage Avenue Mennonite Brethren Church, as well as provincial and national boards, and a number of international medical assignments.

One of Huebert's longstanding interests is history, particularly that of his own heritage, Mennonite history. He attributes some of this interest to his high school Mennonite history teacher, Gerhard Lohrenz. Huebert has published *Hierschau: An example of Russian Mennonite Life* (1986), *Kornelius Martens: Our Skillful Advocate* (1986), *Events and People: Events in Russian Mennonite History and the People that made them Happen* (1999), *Molotschna Historical Atlas* (2003) and *Mennonite Estates in Imperial Russia* (2005). Huebert and William Schroeder have collaborated in the production of the *Mennonite Historical Atlas* (First Edition 1990, Second Edition 1996), which has sold well over 6,000 copies.

Helmut and his wife Dorothy have three children: Karen, David and Susan.



WINNIPEG, CANADA  
2006